



What Every Driver Must Know

State of Michigan

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Introduction

What Every Driver Must Know contains information about operating a motor vehicle safely on Michigan roads. Although this publication includes information about many Michigan traffic laws, it is not meant as a legal document or as a substitute for the Michigan Vehicle Code. Information in this publication is subject to change.

A list of frequently called Secretary of State telephone numbers, the web site address, and other department resources referred to throughout the text are printed on the inside back cover.

Please remember that driving is a privilege, and not a right. Drivers must drive responsibly and safely, obey traffic laws, and never drink and drive. Finally, buckle up and make sure all passengers do too. It is the law!

Before you read further, consider these facts about driving in Michigan. In 1999:

- 415,675 motor vehicle crashes were reported. More than 1,300 people died and more than 124,000 people were injured.
- Almost 31 percent of all fatal traffic crashes occurred at an intersection.
- Alcohol was involved in more than 480 fatal crashes.
- Four out of five accidental deaths for young people ages 15-24 were due to motor vehicle crashes.
- Motor vehicle crashes remained the number one cause of accidental death for young children, far outpacing the next two most frequent causes: fire and drowning.
- Nearly 38 percent of all pedestrian fatalities occurred when crossing streets other than at intersections.
- Excessive speed was a factor in more than 12 percent of fatal crashes.

- The economic cost of traffic crashes to Michigan is staggering. Traffic crashes cost Michigan residents more than \$11.8 million in fatalities; \$12.9 million in injuries; and \$1.6 million in property damage every day or more than \$9.6 billion for the year.
- Motorcycles were involved in more than 2,800 traffic crashes, resulting in 77 deaths and 2,383 injuries.

1999 Michigan Traffic Crash Data—Michigan Department of State Police

1 Michigan Driver License Information

You must be licensed to operate a motor vehicle on public streets and highways. This section provides information about the requirements and procedures for obtaining and renewing a Michigan driver license. The licensing procedures and requirements differ depending on an applicant's age. All applicants must meet requirements listed under General Licensing Requirements.

Michigan Residents

You are considered a Michigan resident if you have a permanent home or employment in Michigan with the intention of remaining in the state.

New Michigan Residents

If you are a new Michigan resident, you must immediately apply for a Michigan driver license at any Secretary of State branch office. You must surrender your current out-of-state driver license because Michigan law permits drivers to hold only one valid driver license at a time. If your previous driver license is suspended or revoked, your application for a Michigan driver license will be denied or cancelled.

You will be required to pass a vision test and pay a fee. No other test is required. **Secretary of State branch offices do not accept credit or debit cards. Payment must be by cash, check, or money order.**

The Secretary of State will contact your previous home state to obtain your driver record, which then becomes part of your Michigan driver record.

General Licensing Requirements

You must meet certain requirements before a Michigan driver license can be issued. If you are age 18 or older, you

are not required to take driver education, although it is strongly recommended.

Teenagers under age 18 are required to successfully meet the requirements of Michigan's Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) program before they can be licensed. For more information, please turn to the section on GDL in this booklet.

You will not be issued a license if you have never been licensed and you have two or more convictions for moving violations on your driver record within the three years prior to the date you apply. To be eligible to reapply, you must wait until you have no more than one conviction on your driver record within the three years prior to the date you reapply.

If you are age 18 or older, before you can get a Michigan driver license you must:

- Present proof of identity.
- Pass a vision test and meet health standards set by the Secretary of State's office.
- Pass a knowledge test.
- Pay the appropriate license fee.
- Complete a minimum 30 days of practice driving on a temporary instruction permit (TIP).
- Pass a road skills test. The road skills test will be administered by an independent testing agency approved by the Secretary of State. A person with a valid out-of-state driver license may have this requirement waived.

If you meet the above requirements, you will be issued a driver license after paying the appropriate fees. In some instances, because of medical conditions or other reasons, restrictions may be placed on your driver license. Should any special licensing conditions be required, these conditions or restrictions will be printed on the driver license. Drivers licensed for the first time will be placed on probation for a minimum of three years. Please refer to information about Michigan's Probationary License Program in this booklet.

The Driver License Process

Providing Proof of Identity

The following are accepted as valid proof of identity. Only original documents will be accepted. Photocopies or facsimiles cannot be used. Documents in foreign languages must be translated into English. For more information about translation requirements, contact a Secretary of State branch office.

Primary Group identification documents must show your full name and date of birth. Primary Group documents include items such as a certified birth certificate, a valid driver license, an out-of-state driver license or identification card, or a passport.

Secondary Group identification documents include items such as a marriage license, divorce decree, photo identification card issued by a Michigan governmental agency, or school records from a Michigan school, college, or university.

A complete list of acceptable documents is available on the Secretary of State web site, at branch offices, by fax, or through the department's Communications Section. Please see the inside back cover of this booklet for telephone numbers and the web site address.

- If you are age 18 or older, you must present at least one Primary Group document and two other documents from the Primary or Secondary groups.
- If you are under 18, and applying for a Graduated Driver Licensing Level 1 License, you must present at least one item from the Primary Group.

Physical Standards

The Secretary of State staff will ask you a few general health questions as part of the screening procedure. Your application may be denied pending additional medical information should the Secretary of State staff believe your physical condition might prevent you from safely operating a motor vehicle.

Vision Test

You will be given a vision test to determine if your vision meets minimum standards. If corrective lenses are needed to pass the test, your driver license will show you must wear corrective lenses while driving. If you fail the vision test, your eye-care specialist must complete a vision statement.

A favorable vision statement means a driver license can be issued. Sometimes special driving limitations, such as “daytime driving only,,, will be required if a vision statement indicates it. If the vision statement is not favorable, your driver license application will be denied.

Knowledge Test

You will be given a knowledge test to determine how well you know Michigan traffic laws and safe driving practices. Applicants age 18 or older will be given this test at the Secretary of State branch office when applying for a Temporary Instruction Permit (TIP). Teens in the Graduated Driver Licensing program must pass a knowledge test as a part of the Segment One driver education class.

If you are required to take a knowledge test for your original operator or chauffeur license, arrive at the Secretary of State branch office at least one hour before closing to allow enough time to complete the test.

If you have difficulty speaking or reading English, branch office staff will provide a list of available spoken language interpreters. Printed translations of the knowledge tests are also available in many languages. Please contact the branch office in advance to obtain a list of interpreters. Hearing-impaired customers can request a sign language interpreter in advance of a branch office visit or may use an interpreter they know.

Road Skills Test

You must be at least 16 years old to take a road skills test. You must pass a road skills test if you have never been licensed and are applying for an original driver license, or your driver license has been expired for more than four years.

Road skills tests are administered by independent third-party testing agencies approved by the Secretary of State.

A list of approved third-party testing agencies is available at all branch offices and from the Secretary of State web site. Be sure to ask the third-party testing agency you choose about their fees before scheduling your test. The Secretary of State does not set the road skills test fee.

The first part of the road skills test requires you to pass a series of off-street, closed-course maneuvers. After passing the first part, you must then pass an on-road driving test to receive your road skills certificate. The road skills test includes urban, expressway, rural highway, and residential driving.

Complete study information is provided in the Secretary of State publication *Road Skills Test Study Guide* available at any branch office, or on the Secretary of State web site. You should review this study guide thoroughly before taking the road skills test. Once the road skills test is passed, you are eligible for a Michigan driver license. If you have a driver license issued by another state, the road skills test may be waived.

Temporary Instruction Permit (TIP)

A Temporary Instruction Permit (TIP) allows you to practice driving with a licensed adult for up to 180 days. A TIP is issued if you are age 18 or older and:

- Have never been licensed, or
- Hold an expired out-of-country driver license.

If you have not had a valid driver license in the past four years, a TIP is optional.

Before obtaining a TIP, you must pass a vision and written knowledge test. In certain cases, a road sign test may also be required. After practicing your driving with a licensed adult for at least 30 days, you are eligible to apply for a Michigan driver license. A road skills test must be taken before you can apply for a driver license.

Restricted License Due to Disability or Illness

When applying for an original or renewal driver license, you may be requested to provide a Physician's Statement of

Examination. A vision statement may be requested in some cases. A physician licensed in Michigan or another state must complete the physician's statement. A physician's statement is required if the Secretary of State has reason to believe you have had a fainting spell, blackout, seizure, or other loss of consciousness in the preceding six months. For a chauffeur or commercial driver license, you must not have had any blackouts, fainting spells, or seizures within the last 12 months.

A physician's statement is also needed for any physical or mental infirmity, impairment, disability, or disease that affects your ability to drive safely. A physician must accurately describe your condition, including any disability or illness, and any medications you have been taking. The physician's statement will be reviewed by the Secretary of State to determine if you meet Michigan's physical and mental standards. The form must be returned within 45 days to the Michigan Department of State, Lansing, Michigan 48918-1601.

- If a physician's statement does not indicate a physical or mental impairment, and if all other standards are met, an unrestricted driver license may be issued.
- If a physician's statement indicates a physical or mental condition that may affect your ability to drive safely, a restricted driver license limiting when or where you can drive may be issued.
- If a restricted driver license is issued because of a disability or illness, a periodic driver reexamination may be required.
- If a physician's statement indicates a serious physical or mental condition at the time you renew your driver license, you will be required to attend a driver reexamination. The reexamination will evaluate your ability to operate a motor vehicle safely. Every effort will be made to help you keep your driver license and continue to drive safely.

Changing Information on Your License

It is important to make sure your driver license lists your correct name and residential address. If you need to change your name as it appears on your driver license, bring your

valid license and proof of the name change, such as a marriage certificate, to a Secretary of State branch office. The name change will be processed and a new license will be issued for a fee.

Michigan law requires that your driver license address, which is the address of your place of residence, match the address on your voter registration card. You may submit a change of address either at a Secretary of State branch office or by mail. If you are submitting a change of address at a branch office, make sure to bring your driver license. You will be given a sticker with your new address for the back of your driver license. There is no fee for this service.

You may also submit a change of address by mail. Change-of-address forms are available on the Secretary of State web site and through Fax-on-Demand. Complete the form and mail it to the address specified at the bottom.

When you submit a change of address, the procedures for updating your voter registration address will also be explained. Please be advised that your driver license may be suspended if you fail to change your address with the Secretary of State.

The Decision To Give Up Driving

Choosing to give up your privilege to drive can be a difficult decision. When you finally decide to “leave the driving to someone else,,, return your driver license to a branch office, where you may obtain a Personal Identification Card (PID). The PID is free to those 65 years of age or older. Those under 65 applying for a PID must pay a fee. A PID is used in place of the driver license for identification purposes.

Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL)

Under Graduated Driver Licensing, teen drivers under age 18 must complete two segments of driver education classroom instruction and meet the requirements for each of the three GDL licensing levels. Driving privileges are increased at each new licensing level as the teen driver gains greater skill and confidence. Graduated Driver Licensing requirements, driving

privileges, and driver education requirements are outlined on pages 15–18. Parents or legal guardians of teen drivers will find additional information in the booklet Michigan’s Graduated Driver Licensing: A Guide for Parents. This publication is available on the Secretary of State web site, at branch offices by request, and is distributed to driver education classes.

GDL Age Requirements

Teens must be at least 14 years and 9 months old to apply for a Level 1 License.

Driver Education Certification

Teens may enroll in driver education at age 14 years, 8 months. Teens are required to complete a two-segment driver education course. These segments provide information about traffic safety, basic vehicle operation, laws, and regulations as well as on-the-road driving experience. For additional information about driver education requirements, please contact the Michigan Department of Education.

Parental Consent and Support

After passing Segment One of driver education, teens must go to a Secretary of State branch office to apply for their Level 1 license. A parent or legal guardian must accompany the teen to sign the application. The parent or legal guardian must sign the application or the teen driver will not be issued a Level 1 License. Signing indicates parental/legal guardian approval for licensing of a minor.

The Secretary of State is working with parents to help ensure teen drivers become safe and courteous drivers. As a parent or legal guardian, you are often the best judge of your teen driver’s progress, skill, and maturity behind the wheel. Involvement from you is crucial to the coaching, learning, and driving experience of your teen driver so he or she becomes a safe driver. Although GDL requires teens to complete 50 hours of supervised driving, you are encouraged to provide supervision beyond this minimum.

You also have the legal right to request that your teen be held at a certain GDL level, dropped back a level, or have all driving privileges canceled if you believe your teen is not ready to handle certain driving responsibilities. Forms for changing the status of your teen's GDL driving privileges are available at any Secretary of State branch office. GDL ends for all teens at age 18.

Graduated Driver Licensing Summary

Driver Education—Segment One

Graduated Driver Licensing requires drivers under age 18 to complete two segments of driver education. Segment One must include:

- 24 hours of in-class instruction.
- 6 hours of behind-the-wheel instruction.

A teen must be 14 years, 8 months old to enroll in a Segment One driver education course. Once a teen successfully completes Segment One, a green Michigan Department of Education Segment One Certificate of Completion is issued by the driver education instructor. The certificate of completion is not a permit to drive and may not be used as a driver license.

Level 1 License

After the driver education instructor issues the **green** Segment One certificate, the teen and parent should go to a Secretary of State branch office **immediately** to apply for a Level 1 License. A teen must be at least 14 years, 9 months old to apply. The Level 1 License is a paper license. No photograph will be taken until the Level 2 License is issued.

To obtain a Level 1 License, the teen and a parent or legal guardian must go to a Secretary of State branch office and present a:

- Primary Group identification document to verify the full name and date of birth of the teen. The teen must be at

least 14 years, 9 months old to apply for the Level 1 License. (See page 9 for more information about Primary Group identification documents.)

- Green Michigan Department of Education Segment One Certificate of Completion.

The teen must pass the vision and health standards prescribed by the Secretary of State. A parent or legal guardian must be present to sign the Level 1 License application, granting approval.

With a Level 1 License, the teen driver may only drive while accompanied by a licensed parent, legal guardian, or designated adult age 21 or older. Among other requirements, a teen must hold a Level 1 License for at least 180 days to be eligible for a Level 2 License.

Driver Education—Segment Two

Segment Two of driver education consists of six hours of classroom instruction. Driver education instructors may also provide some on-the-road driving instruction, although it is not required.

To enroll in a Segment Two driver education course, the teen must have:

- Completed a Segment One driver education course at least 90 days prior to enrolling in Segment Two.
- Obtained a Level 1 License.
- Completed at least 30 of the mandatory 50 hours of parent-teen driving, which includes 2 of the 10 hours of nighttime driving.

When the teen completes Segment Two, a white Michigan Department of Education Segment Two Certificate of Completion will be issued by the driver education instructor.

Level 2 License

A teen will advance from a Level 1 License to a Level 2 License, provided all of the mandatory requirements have been met. Teens must complete both Segment One and Segment Two of the driver education course to qualify for a

Level 2 License. Teens must not incur a moving violation resulting in a conviction or civil infraction determination, or been involved in an at-fault crash during the 90-day period immediately preceding application. The Level 2 License requires the teen to be photographed.

To obtain a Level 2 License, teens and their parent or legal guardian must go to a Secretary of State branch office and present:

- Proof the teen is at least 16 years old. (The Level 1 License is acceptable proof.)
- The skills test certificate, verifying the teen has passed a road skills test given by a third-party tester approved by the Secretary of State. (Level 1 drivers may take their road skills test at age 15, provided they meet all the requirements for obtaining a Level 2 License. However, they will not be issued a Level 2 License until they are 16.)
- Proof that they have possessed a Level 1 License for a minimum of 180 days. If the Level 1 License is lost, please refer to page 26 for information about replacing it.
- The white Michigan Department of Education Segment Two Certificate of Completion.
- A log book or other records documenting the teen's 50 hours of supervised driving with a licensed parent, legal guardian, or designated adult age 21 or older. GDL requires 10 of the 50 hours of supervised driving to be completed at night.

A Level 2 License allows teens to drive unsupervised except between midnight and 5 a.m., when they must be accompanied by a licensed parent, legal guardian, or designated adult age 21 or older. Teens who must drive between midnight and 5 a.m. because of work are not required to have an adult with them. They should be able to provide proof they are traveling directly to or from work.

Level 3 License

A teen will automatically advance to a Level 3 License provided he or she is age 17, has met all driving requirements, and has parental authorization. This

authorization is granted when the parent or legal guardian signs for the teen's Level 2 License. If the parent does not authorize automatic advancement to a Level 3 License, the teen will remain at Level 2 until the parent accompanies the teen to a Secretary of State branch office and grants authorization, or until the teen turns 18.

If the parent has authorized the teen to automatically advance to a Level 3 License and the teen has successfully met all licensing requirements, the Level 3 License will be mailed to the teen. There is no need to go to a branch office.

To obtain a Level 3 License, the teen must:

- Be at least 17 years old.
- Have driven at Level 2 for a minimum of six months.
- Have completed 12 consecutive months of driving without a moving violation or at-fault crash.

A Level 3 License grants full driving privileges.

GDL ends for all teens when they are 18.

Probationary Program

New drivers, including teen drivers under Graduated Driver Licensing, are placed on probation for a minimum of three years. The probationary period is a way for the Secretary of State to monitor the driving performance of new drivers. Probation is a separate program from GDL, but works like GDL to help new drivers reduce their crash risk and drive safely.

Traffic Violations While on Probation

Each traffic violation posted on your driver record during probation will result in a contact by the Secretary of State. If your driver record shows unsafe driving behavior, including speeding, stop sign violations, and crashes, you may be required to undergo a driver assessment reexamination. At a driver assessment reexamination, a restriction, suspension, or combination of both may be imposed on your license.

Probationary licensing controls will also extend the time a young driver holds a GDL Level 1 or 2 License. The purpose of probationary licensing controls is to reduce the risk of a traffic crash and encourage safer driving.

Ending Probation

To complete probation, you must drive the last 10 months of your probationary period without receiving any tickets or driver license suspensions, or causing any crashes. Failure to do so will automatically extend your probation until you can demonstrate you are a safe driver by remaining violation and crash free for a 10-month period.

The first two years after probation are called post probation. You are subject to a driver reexamination during this time if you have nine or more points and an alcohol-related ticket or crash, or other at-fault crash.

Points placed on your driver record during probation or post probation are not automatically erased when probation and post probation end. Points remain on your driver record for two years from the conviction date. If you have 12 or more points on your driver record, you will be required to attend a driver assessment reexamination, regardless of whether those points were issued during probation or post probation.

For additional information about probation, visit the Secretary of State web site.

Other Licenses and Endorsements

Most Michigan drivers will only need an operator license. However, professions such as taxi driver, school bus driver, or commercial truck driver require special licensing and endorsements.

Commercial Driver License

Before you can operate a commercial motor vehicle, you must be at least age 18 and hold a Michigan Commercial Driver License (CDL). A commercial vehicle endorsement will be required in addition to a group designation (see page 20) when operating double trailers, tank vehicles, vehicles carrying hazardous materials, and buses.

Knowledge, vision, and skills tests are also required. You will need a CDL with the proper group designation to operate the following vehicles:

Group A:

- Vehicles that tow trailers or other vehicles that have a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) over 10,000 pounds.

Unless certain restrictions apply, the Group A designation allows you to operate Group B and Group C vehicles.

Group B:

- A single vehicle, including buses, having a GVWR of 26,001 pounds or more.
- A combination of vehicles with a combined GVWR, or Gross Combined Weight Rating (GCWR), of 26,001 pounds or more when the vehicle being towed has a GVWR of 10,000 pounds or less.

Unless certain restrictions apply, the Group B designation allows you to operate Group C vehicles.

Group C:

Small vehicles under 26,001 pounds GVWR that are designed to carry:

- 16 or more persons, including the driver.
- 15 or fewer persons including the driver, transporting children directly to or from school and home on a regular basis for pay.
- Hazardous materials or waste in amounts requiring the display of a placard.

CDL Temporary Instruction Permit

A CDL Temporary Instruction Permit (TIP) allows you to practice driving only under the supervision of a CDL driver licensed with the appropriate group designation for the type of commercial vehicle you are operating. A TIP may be obtained after passing all the required knowledge tests and is valid for 150 days from the date of issue. There is no minimum time you must have a TIP before taking the skills tests. Skills tests are administered by third-party testing

agencies—public or private agencies authorized by the Secretary of State. A list of approved third-party testing agencies is available at any Secretary of State branch office, from the Secretary of State web site, or Fax-on-Demand. For more information about Fax-on-Demand, see the inside back cover of this booklet.

Additional CDL Information

Contact a Secretary of State branch office for information about specific CDL exceptions for active duty military (including the National Guard), firefighters, police officers, and farmers. Applicants may request a copy of the CDL Manual from any Secretary of State branch office or download a copy from the Secretary of State web site. The CDL manual contains all the information needed to apply and study for your CDL written and skills tests.

For information about other commercial driver qualifications, including the physical/medical requirements contact:

Trucks and Commercial Buses

**Michigan State Police
Motor Carrier Division
P.O. Box 30632
Lansing, MI 48913-0001
517/336-6195
www.msp.state.mi.us/mcd/qa.htm**

**Michigan Trucking Association
1131 Centennial Way
Lansing, MI 48917
517/321-1951
www.mitrucking.org**

School Buses

**Michigan Department of Education
Pupil Transportation
P.O. Box 30008
Lansing, MI 48909
517/373-3324
www.mde.state.mi.us**

Chauffeur License

You must be at least 16 years of age, completed driver education, and passed a chauffeur license knowledge test before a chauffeur license can be issued. You will need a chauffeur license if you are employed to operate:

- A motor vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or more.
- A motor vehicle as a common or contract carrier of property.
- A motor vehicle designated to carry passengers, or students to and from school. Examples include a motor vehicle with a seating capacity of less than 16 persons, such as a day-care van or larger vehicles such as a school bus, tour bus, public transit bus, shuttle bus, large passenger van, or trolley.
- A taxi or limousine.

Certain operations are exempt from requiring a chauffeur license, including operating a motor vehicle for a volunteer program when you only receive reimbursement for the vehicle's operating costs; operating a motor home for personal use; or a parent shuttling students to and from school and school-related events. For more information, please refer to the brochure *Your Michigan Chauffeur License* available at Secretary of State branch offices or from the Secretary of State web site.

Moped License

If you have a valid operator or chauffeur license, you are allowed to operate a moped on public roadways. If you do not have a valid operator or chauffeur license and are at least age 15, you may apply for a moped license at a Secretary of State branch office. You are not eligible for a moped license if your operator or chauffeur license is suspended, revoked, or denied—unless the suspension is for a medical reason. For more information, obtain a copy of the brochure *Riding A Moped Safely* at a Secretary of State branch office or from the Secretary of State web site.

Motorcycle Endorsement

To operate a motorcycle on public roads, you must have a valid Michigan driver license with a motorcycle endorsement. The fee for the motorcycle endorsement is added to your driver license fee.

To obtain a motorcycle endorsement you must:

- Pass a motorcycle knowledge test at a Secretary of State branch office.
- Complete a motorcycle safety course approved by the Michigan Department of Education OR pass a motorcycle skills test administered by a third-party testing agency approved by the Secretary of State.
 - If you fail the skills test twice, you must present proof of passing an approved motorcycle safety course.
 - If you are age 16 or 17, you are required to complete a motorcycle safety course.

A motorcycle temporary instruction permit (TIP) is issued if you are at least 16 years old and hold a valid Michigan driver license or driver license TIP. Applicants ages 16 and 17 must present proof of enrollment in, or completion of, a motorcycle safety course. This requirement may be waived if you have a valid license or endorsement to operate a motorcycle from another state.

A motorcycle TIP is valid for 150 days. When using a motorcycle TIP you must be under the constant visual supervision of a licensed motorcycle operator at least age 18. While using a TIP, you may not carry passengers or operate your motorcycle at night.

For more information, obtain a copy of the *Michigan Motorcycle Operator Manual* from a Secretary of State branch office or visit the Secretary of State web site.

Recreational Double R Endorsement

A “recreational double,, is a pickup truck pulling a fifth wheel trailer designed for recreational living purposes, with a second trailer attached to the rear of the fifth wheel trailer. The pickup truck must have a towing rate equal to, or

greater than, the total weight being towed. To operate a recreational double, you must have an “R,” endorsement on your driver license. Anyone age 18 or older with a valid driver license may apply for this endorsement at a branch office. A knowledge test is required. There is no skills test. Drivers holding a Group “A,” CDL with a “T,” double or triple trailers endorsement can operate a recreational double without the “R,” endorsement. Triple trailers are not permitted in Michigan. For more information, obtain a copy of the brochure *A Recreational Double Endorsement* at a Secretary of State branch office or visit the Secretary of State web site.

Restricted License for Minors

A minor restricted license may be issued to meet the essential transportation needs of the family farm. The license is approved only when there is a demonstrated hardship. This means there are no alternative means of meeting the transportation needs and the family farm is functioning at a low level of income.

Applications for minor restricted licenses are provided upon request. The minor applicant’s household must provide written proof of financial hardship. All documents presented for a minor restricted license are reviewed and additional documentation may be requested to verify eligibility.

Applicants for a minor restricted license must be at least age 14 and not more than 16. The minor restricted license is valid until the applicant’s next birthday if that birthday is at least six months from the date the license was issued. Minor restricted licenses issued within six months or less of an applicant’s birthday will not expire until a year after his or her upcoming birthday.

A minor restricted license is not an alternative to Michigan’s Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) requirements. GDL requires teens to complete a driver education program and requires an extended period of supervised driving. Before a minor restricted license can be issued, a teen must complete a GDL Segment One driver education course and pass a vision and a road skills test. Before a minor restricted license can be renewed, the teen must complete Segment Two of driver education.

Renewing Your Michigan Driver License

The Renewal Process

A driver license is usually valid for four years and expires on your birthday in the year shown on the license's upper right corner. If you are under age 21, your driver license will expire on your 21st birthday. If your driver license was issued before Spring 1998, and you are renewing it by mail, you will receive a sticker with the updated expiration date for the back of the license. Motorists with licenses issued beginning Spring 1998 that feature the Mackinac Bridge on the front will receive a new license when renewing by mail.

To remind you to renew your driver license, the Secretary of State sends a renewal notice about 45 days before expiration. The renewal notice is sent to the address listed on department records. Do not let your driver license expire unless you will no longer be driving. Driving without a valid license is illegal.

A driver license will not be renewed if your driver record shows six or more unpaid parking tickets, or if your driver license has been suspended or revoked. When renewing your driver license at a branch office, a vision screening and a renewal test will be given. A new photograph will also be taken. When renewing at a Secretary of State branch office, fees must be paid by cash, money order, or check. Credit or debit cards are not accepted at branch offices. A credit card may be used for payment to renew a driver license by mail.

Convenient Renewal by Mail

If your driver record is free of traffic convictions and civil infractions during the past four years, and you did not renew by mail last time, you may be eligible to renew your driver license by mail. Renewal by mail is easy. Payment must be made by check, money order, or credit card. To register to vote, or update a voter registration, complete and return the form enclosed with your renewal application.

After renewing by mail, your next driver license renewal must be completed at a Secretary of State branch office.

If there is any change in your physical or mental condition that may affect your ability to drive since you last renewed, you must come to a branch office regardless of what the renewal notice says. Plan to renew at least two weeks before your current license expires. Your physician may need to fill out a special form from the branch office before your license is renewed.

Special Renewals

Duplicate License: If your driver license has been lost, destroyed, mutilated, or is illegible, apply for a duplicate at a Secretary of State branch office. Identification documents are required to issue a replacement license, such as certified birth certificates, U.S. or Canadian passports, marriage licenses, and photo identification cards issued by a Michigan governmental agency. Contact a Secretary of State branch office for a complete list of acceptable documents and specific requirements. Please be aware that photocopies and facsimiles are not adequate proof. Only original documents will be accepted. You may also renew your driver license at the same time if your license expires within one year.

Early Renewals: A driver license may be renewed up to six months early at a branch office if you are unable to renew it on time for any reason.

Out-of-State Renewal by Mail: If you are temporarily residing out of state and cannot return to Michigan to renew your driver license, you may renew it by mail, or you may choose to get a special driving permit. With the permit, your driver license is valid for 90 days after its expiration, or for two weeks after you return to Michigan, whichever happens first.

To request a special driving permit, please provide the following information in writing: your first, middle, and last names; date of birth; driver license number; home and out-of-state addresses; and length of time expected to be out of Michigan. Mail your request to the Secretary of State at:

**Michigan Department of State
Out-of-State Resident Services
Lansing, Michigan 48918-1502
Telephone: 517/322-1473**

License Lost While Out-of-State: If you are out-of-state and lose your license, you may request a special 90-day permit allowing you to drive back to Michigan. As soon as you return, you should immediately apply for a new driver license at a Secretary of State branch office.

To request the special 90-day driving permit, please follow the instructions for obtaining a permit under Out-of-State Renewal by Mail.

Military Personnel and Dependents: If a driver license expires while you are on active duty in the U.S. military, it remains valid until 30 days from the date of your next leave, or until 30 days after your discharge, whichever comes first. Military personnel driving on an expired license should carry their leave or discharge papers.

If you are on duty out-of-state, you may renew your driver license using out-of-state renewal by mail procedures. Michigan residents in the military who are stationed in Michigan must renew their driver license using the same procedures in-state drivers follow. The driver license of a military dependent is not granted the extension allowed for military personnel. However, a dependent's license may be renewed through the mail.

Driver License Reciprocity Agreements

For most travelers planning a vacation or business trip abroad, a Michigan driver license or an International Driving Permit is sufficient to drive in a foreign country. International Driving Permits are issued by AAA. Contact your local AAA branch office for more information. However, if you plan to live in France or Germany for one year or more, you may take advantage of the driver license reciprocity agreements Michigan has with these countries. Reciprocity agreements allow Michigan residents to waive many or all of the requirements for obtaining a driver license issued in that country.

Obtaining a French or German Driver License

To obtain a French or German driver license, submit the following:

- Official identification such as an identity card, passport or local residency certificate.
- A recent photograph.
- Your Michigan driver license translated into French/German.
- A statement written and signed by you stating your Michigan driver license is valid.

There may be additional criteria, such as passing a written test or a road test, which must be met before a French driver license is issued. Check with the American Embassy in Paris for more information. If you wish to obtain a driver license issued in a country that does not have a reciprocity agreement with Michigan, you must fulfill all of that country's requirements before the license will be issued.

2 Special Information and Programs

The Secretary of State oversees many areas involving traffic safety issues, automobile and other vehicle registration, and licensing issues. This section provides information about several programs not directly related to motor vehicles, such as voter registration and organ donor programs.

Voter Registration Information

You must be registered to vote to participate in Michigan elections. Eligible residents may register at a Secretary of State branch office.

If you are at a branch office applying for, renewing, or updating information on your driver license, you also will be provided with an opportunity to register to vote.

To register to vote you must be:

- A U.S. citizen.
- At least 18 years of age on or before election day.
- A resident of Michigan and the city or township where you are registering to vote.

In addition to Secretary of State branch offices, you may register by mail or at your local county, city, or township clerk's office. You must register at least 30 days before the election. If you move within your city or township, you must change the address on your voter registration. If you move to another city or township, you must register to vote in that jurisdiction.

If the address you provide on a voter registration application does not match the residential address on your driver record, your driver record will be updated to match your voter registration. If you are registering to vote at a clerk's office, a change-of-address sticker will be mailed to you for your driver license.

The Secretary of State will enclose a voter registration application with your renewal notice if you are eligible to renew your driver license by mail. To register, fill out the voter registration form and send it with your driver license renewal form. Voter registration forms may also be printed from the Secretary of State web site. If you are already registered and your address has not changed, there is no need to mail the voter registration form.

Organ Donor Program

The Secretary of State provides you with several convenient methods for designating organ donor wishes. If you wish to be an organ donor, fill out a Secretary of State organ donor registry card, and sign the back of your driver license. Most importantly, discuss your wishes with your family.

To have your name placed on the Gift of Life Organ and Tissue Donor Registry, fill out an organ donor registry enrollment card available at any Secretary of State branch office. Enrollment cards are also mailed with driver licenses and personal identification cards, and are available on the Secretary of State web site. You may also register to be an organ donor online through the web site.

The Michigan driver license and personal identification card (PID) have space on the back to write organ and tissue donor information. Before completing this information, the area should be cleaned with rubbing alcohol and allowed to dry.

If you have a driver license or PID issued before Spring 1998, you can make your organ donor wishes known by obtaining an organ donor sticker for the back of your license at a Secretary of State branch office.

The Secretary of State is committed to promoting greater organ donor awareness. Each year, more than 2,000 Michigan residents wait for an organ or tissue transplant.

For more information about organ donation, telephone toll-free:

Gift of Life Agency of Michigan
1-800-482-4881

National Kidney Foundation of Michigan
1-800-482-1455

American Liver Foundation
1-800-GO-LIVER (46-54837)

Personal Identification Cards

A personal identification card (PID) can be issued to any eligible resident, regardless of age. You may not have a PID and a Michigan driver license unless your license has been restricted, suspended, or revoked. To obtain a PID, visit a Secretary of State branch office. Proof of identification will be required before a PID will be issued. Please contact a Secretary of State branch office, Fax-on-Demand, or the Secretary of State web site for more information about acceptable identification. All identification is subject to Secretary of State approval.

There is a fee for a PID, but the cards are issued free to residents who are blind, age 65 or older, or who have had their driving privileges terminated due to a mental or physical disability. Your PID expires four years from your last birthday and may be renewed by mail. Under Michigan law, a PID is as valid as a driver license for identification purposes.

3 Your Michigan Driver Record

Michigan maintains a driver record for every driver. The driver record contains information the Secretary of State is required to maintain, such as moving violations, traffic crashes, and alcohol-related convictions. Drivers with unsatisfactory records may be required to attend a driver reexamination, face possible loss of their license, and pay reinstatement fees. Safe drivers benefit by having a reduced risk of traffic crashes and serious injury, as well as lower insurance rates. Driving safely in Michigan matters.

Driving is a privilege. Once you obtain a driver license, you must continually show that you have the skill and knowledge to drive safely, or your driver license may be restricted, suspended, or revoked. The Secretary of State has access to accident information reported by law enforcement, and convictions for moving violations and certain drug violations from the courts. The Secretary of State is also notified of any traffic crashes, convictions, and findings of responsibility in other states. Convictions from other states will appear on your Michigan driver record.

Most violations stay on your driver record for at least seven years. Certain violations and license suspensions under the Michigan Implied Consent Law stay on your driver record for at least 10 years.

Under Michigan's Driver Privacy Protection Act, personal information on your driver record is private and is not released to the general public unless there is a permissible purpose as prescribed by law. Some examples of permissible purposes include insurance rating, automobile recalls, and driver verification for car rental companies. Personal information includes your name, address, driver license number, and similar information. Your driver record also

contains information about at-fault crashes, as well as any civil or criminal moving violations you may have.

Traffic Tickets

When a uniformed law enforcement officer driving an official police vehicle signals you to stop, you must pull out of traffic and stop safely as soon as possible. The officer may stop you for a variety of reasons. You may be receiving an emergency message, the officer may believe you committed a violation, your vehicle may match the description of a stolen vehicle, or it may have defective equipment. You must be able to show your driver license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance to the officer.

Michigan's Point System

Under Michigan law, some traffic violations are civil infractions while others are misdemeanors or felonies. Depending on the violation and how it is resolved, you may be fined, referred to a special program or, in the most serious situations, sent to jail. In most cases, if you do not take care of a traffic ticket, your driver license will be suspended.

Each time you are convicted of a traffic violation, you will have to pay certain court fines and costs. In addition, points may be posted to your driver record. Under Michigan's point system, each traffic violation has a point value, which is set by law in the Michigan Vehicle Code. Points are placed on your driver record only after you have been convicted or found guilty of, or responsible for, a civil infraction. Points placed on your driver record remain there for two years from the date of conviction. If you believe there are extenuating circumstances for the ticket you received, these must be submitted when you appear in court. The Secretary of State cannot set aside a court conviction or the points for it. The following shows the points for some traffic violations:

Points For Some Traffic Convictions*

Six Points:

- Manslaughter, negligent homicide, or other felony involving use of a motor vehicle.
- Operating under the influence of liquor or drugs.
- Failing to stop and give identification at the scene of a crash.
- Reckless driving.
- Unlawful bodily alcohol content of 0.10 or more.
- Refusal to take a chemical test.
- Fleeing or eluding a police officer.

Four Points:

- Drag racing.
- Impaired driving.
- Under age 21 with any bodily alcohol content.
- 16 mph or more over the legal speed limit.
- Failure to yield/show due caution for emergency vehicles.

Three Points:

- Careless driving.
- Disobeying a traffic signal or stop sign or improper passing.
- 11 through 15 mph over the legal speed limit.
- Failure to stop at railroad crossing.
- Failure to stop for a school bus or for disobeying a school crossing guard.

Two Points:

- 10 mph or less over the legal speed limit.
- Open alcohol container in vehicle.
- All other moving violations of traffic laws.
- Refusal of Preliminary Breath Test (PBT) by anyone under age 21.

*Please note that snowmobile and off-road vehicle (ORV) alcohol-conviction points are placed on a driver record and may result in licensing action against your driving privileges even though the violation happened while operating a snowmobile or ORV. More information is provided in Section 11, on page 100.

Obtaining a Copy of Your Driver Record

To obtain a copy of your driver record, submit the form *Requesting Your Own Record* BDVR-153, to the Michigan Department of State Record Look-Up Unit. Forms are available through Fax-on-Demand, at branch offices, from the Secretary of State web site, and the Record Look-Up Unit. A fee will be charged for each copy you request. Please contact the Record Look-Up Unit at:

**Michigan Department of State
Record Look-Up Unit
Lansing, MI 48918
Telephone: 517/322-1624
Fax: 517/335-4329**

4 Losing Your Privilege to Drive

The privilege to drive is often taken for granted, but you may lose this privilege for a variety of reasons. Motorists who repeatedly drive while drunk or with a suspended license, or who may pose a safety threat to themselves or others on the road due to a health condition, may be required to undergo a driver reexamination. This section provides information about the Secretary of State's Driver Assessment Division, driver assessment reexaminations, how driving sanctions can affect your driver license, the Graduated Driver Licensing program, probation, and post probation.

Licensing Actions

Driver license restrictions, suspensions, and revocations

Your driver license may be restricted, suspended, or revoked depending on the situation. With a restricted license, you may only drive under the terms and conditions listed on the restricted license. If your license is suspended, your driving privileges are taken away for a period of time, ranging from days to years. A revoked license means you have lost all driving privileges. With a revocation, you must wait one to five years before you are eligible to reapply for possible relicensure.

Mandatory licensing actions required by state law

Michigan law requires the Secretary of State to automatically restrict, suspend, or revoke your license for certain violations. For example, stealing motor fuel, reckless driving, drunk driving, and refusing to submit to a breath test will all result in mandatory restrictions, suspensions, or revocations.

Licensing actions imposed by the Secretary of State

The Secretary of State's Driver Assessment Division may also impose driver license restrictions, suspensions, and revocations after a driver assessment exam. The actions taken against your driver license will depend on a number of factors, including the type of violation or unsafe driving behavior involved, your driving record, and your willingness to comply with assessment recommendations and requirements.

Driver Assessment Reexaminations

The Secretary of State Driver Assessment Division is responsible for conducting driver reexaminations as provided by the Michigan Vehicle Code. The Secretary of State may conduct a reexamination if there is reason to believe you are unable to operate a motor vehicle safely because of health reasons, crash involvement, or an unsatisfactory driver record. If you are under probation or Graduated Driver Licensing, you may be required to attend a driver reexamination after only one or two violations. The purpose of the driver reexamination is to discuss driving performance, determine the appropriate licensing controls to reduce driving risk associated with this performance, and encourage improvement. Licensing controls may include restrictions, suspensions, revocations, or a combination of these actions.

The Driver Assessment Reexamination Process

The Driver Assessment reexamination process determines your ability to safely operate a vehicle and if any licensing controls should be imposed. The reexamination may be court ordered, or requested because of unsafe driving due to a suspected medical condition or risky driving behavior.

Michigan law allows for a driver reexamination based on one or more of the following criteria:

- The Secretary of State has reason to believe that you cannot drive safely due to a mental or physical condition.

- You have been involved in a fatal accident.
- You have been involved in three or more traffic accidents resulting in personal injury or property damage within the past two years.
- You have accumulated 12 or more points within a two-year period.
- You have been convicted of violating the restrictions, terms, or conditions of your license.

The reexamination process will require you to pass vision and knowledge tests and may require a road test. A medical statement may also be required for review. If you must attend a reexamination with a driver analyst, time will be provided for the analyst to review your record and discuss your driving behavior with you. If your license is restricted, suspended, or revoked, you will also be given your appeal rights and licensing reinstatement information.

Teen Drivers, Probationary Drivers, and Reexaminations

Teen drivers under Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) and drivers under probation may also be required to attend a driver assessment reexamination based on the violations posted to their driver records. Depending on the nature of the violation, a license may be restricted, or suspended for up to a year.

The parent or legal guardian of GDL drivers will be notified should their teen driver violate certain conditions of the GDL license. Any suspension action taken against a teen's GDL license may delay advancement to the next GDL level.

Licensing controls may also extend probation. Safe driving not only reduces the risk of a traffic crash or violation, but it helps ensure that a teen or new driver will successfully complete GDL or probation on time.

5 Substance Abuse and Driving

When you drink alcohol or use other drugs and drive, you endanger your life as well as the lives of your passengers and other motorists. Each year, thousands of people are killed or permanently disabled because someone drove under the influence of alcohol or other chemical substances. Michigan takes a strong stand against drivers who abuse substances and drive. This section provides information about drinking and driving, penalties for breaking the law, and the state's most recent deterrent, the Repeat Offender laws.

Drinking and Driving is Illegal

Drink and drive, and the results can be deadly. Several hundred people die every year in Michigan from alcohol-related crashes. The courts, law enforcement, state and local governments, as well as a number of private agencies, are working together to reduce and prevent the thousands of injuries and deaths that result from drunk driving in Michigan.

Under Michigan law, it is illegal to drive:

- When under the influence of, or impaired by, alcohol, illegal drugs, and certain prescribed medications.
- With a bodily alcohol content of 0.10 or more (driving while under the influence).
- With a bodily alcohol content of more than 0.07 but less than 0.10 (driving while impaired).

If you are under age 21 it is against the law:

- To drive with a bodily alcohol content of 0.02 or greater, or have any presence of alcohol other than that consumed at a generally recognized religious ceremony.

- To buy, possess, or consume alcoholic beverages. You may transport alcohol in a vehicle only when accompanied by an adult age 21 or older. If you are caught with alcohol in your vehicle and there is no adult accompanying you, you can be charged with a misdemeanor, whether you're on the road or in a parking lot.

It is best to never drink and drive. If you plan on drinking, select a designated driver ahead of time who is not going to drink. You can also ask someone else to give you a ride, call a taxi, use public transportation, or seek other assistance. If someone you know has been drinking or using drugs, do not let him or her drive. Find a designated driver, call a taxi, or insist that the person use public transportation. Never ride with anyone who has been drinking or using drugs. If necessary, take away a person's car keys and offer him or her a place to sleep. Be sure drivers are completely sober before they get behind the wheel.

Effects of Alcohol

Driving requires concentration, motor skills, common sense, and a concern for the safety of everyone on the road. Alcohol affects people differently. Mixing drugs or medications with alcohol can be especially dangerous and even deadly, especially behind the wheel.

The effects of alcohol are the same whether you drink beer, wine, or whiskey. A 12-ounce can of beer, 5-ounce glass of wine, and a 1.5-ounce shot of whiskey all contain the same amount of alcohol. Drink a standard serving of any of these and the effects will be the same to your body. Your judgment and self-control will be affected. Drinking even one drink can impair your ability to drive, slow your reaction time, dull your concentration, and cause visual problems. Many people mistakenly believe that coffee, a cold shower, exercise, or fresh air can sober them up. The only thing that sobers you up is time.

Illegal or Street Drugs and Medications

Because everyone's metabolism is different, it's difficult to predict how medications and drugs will affect the body. Drugs and medications can be as dangerous as alcohol when mixed with driving. Illegal or "street," drugs are sold without a prescription and are particularly dangerous because users do not always know the contents, purity, or possible effects of these drugs. Prescription and non-prescription medications may also contain substances that can adversely affect your ability to drive safely. Some drugs such as antihistamines, which are found in many cold remedies and allergy preparations, tranquilizers, sleeping pills, and pain relievers may cause drowsiness. Diet pills, "stay awake," drugs, and other medications with stimulants such as caffeine, ephedrine, and pseudoephedrine may cause excitability or drowsiness. Effects may also vary depending on the combination of drugs. Know the contents and potential side effects of any drugs you are taking and be sure it is safe to drive when using them. For more information, consult your physician or pharmacist.

Recognizing Drivers Who Have Been Drinking or Using Other Drugs

It is possible to recognize drivers who may have been drinking or using other drugs. They may:

- Weave within their lane.
- Wander from one lane to another.
- Run off the pavement.
- Stop too quickly or slowly.
- Drive too quickly or slowly.
- Go through stop signs or other signals.
- Drive on the wrong side of the road.

These signs do not always mean that the driver has been drinking or using drugs, but they do require your full attention. If you observe a dangerous situation, do not become personally involved. Get an accurate description of

the vehicle and license plate number. Call 911, the local Michigan State Police post, or a telephone operator for police help. You are most likely to encounter other drivers who have been drinking or using drugs at night or early morning, particularly from 8 p.m. to 4 a.m.; on the weekends, especially late Friday and Saturday nights; on holidays; or near bars and other businesses that sell alcohol.

When you see a suspected drunk driver, put as much distance as possible between yourself and the suspected drunk driver. Think twice about passing a suspected drunk driver. Let the driver pass you, especially when approaching rapidly. Avoid their uncertain actions. Stay alert. It is possible that the same driver may be met further down the road.

Anti-Drunk Driving Laws

Anti-drunk driving laws require swift and sure action and stiff penalties for drunk drivers. The laws:

- Require courts to decide drunken driving cases within 77 days after an arrest.
- Require a mandatory six-month driver license suspension even for a first conviction. A driver may be eligible for a restricted license after serving 30 days of the suspension.
- Require five days to one year of consecutive jail time and/or 30 to 90 days of community service for a second conviction of drunk driving.
- Include a felony for a conviction for drunk driving that causes death.
- Include a felony for a conviction for drunk driving that causes a serious injury to another.
- Require fines for a conviction of driving while a driver license is suspended or revoked of up to \$500 for a first offense, and \$1,000 for an additional offense.
- Do not allow hardship appeals for habitual alcohol offenders.

- Require a reinstatement fee of \$125 if your driver license was suspended, revoked, or restricted. This fee is separate from the reinstatement fee needed for any other driving violations.

Preliminary Breath Test

When stopped by a law enforcement officer for suspicion of driving while intoxicated, you may be asked to take sobriety tests including a Preliminary Breath Test (PBT) at the roadside to determine whether you are under the influence of alcohol. If you refuse to take the PBT, you will be charged with a civil infraction and fined up to \$100 plus court costs. Persons under age 21 who refuse to take the PBT will receive two points on their driver record. Even if you take the PBT, you must still take the evidentiary chemical test (blood, breath, or urine test).

Michigan's Implied Consent Law

If arrested, you will be required to take a chemical test to determine your bodily alcohol content (BAC). Under Michigan's Implied Consent Law, all drivers are considered to have given their consent to this test. If you refuse a test, six points will be added to your driver record and your license will be suspended for six months. Please be aware that suspension of a license is automatic for any refusal to submit to the test. This is a separate consequence from any subsequent convictions resulting from the traffic stop.

If you are arrested a second time in seven years and again unreasonably refuse the test, six points will be added to your driver record and your license will be suspended for one year.

If you refuse to take the test under the Implied Consent Law or if the test shows your BAC is 0.10 or more, your driver license will be destroyed by the officer, and you will be issued a 625 g paper permit to drive until your case is resolved in court.

Types of Charges:

- Operating While Impaired (OWI) means that because of alcohol or other drugs in your body, your ability to operate a motor vehicle was visibly impaired.

- **Operating Under the Influence of Liquor (OUIL)** means the alcohol in your body substantially affected your driving ability so you could not operate a motor vehicle safely.
- **Operating Under the Influence of Drugs (OUID)** means that drugs in your body substantially affected your driving ability so you could not operate a motor vehicle safely.
- **Operating With an Unlawful Bodily Alcohol Content (UBAC)** means at the time you were driving, your bodily alcohol content was at or above 0.10. This can be shown by a chemical test.
- **Under Age 21 Operating With Any Bodily Alcohol Content** means having a BAC of 0.02 to 0.07 or any presence of alcohol other than that consumed at a generally recognized religious ceremony.

Commercial Drivers and Alcohol

While many of the drunk driving charges are the same for commercial drivers as other motorists, there are some important distinctions. When operating a commercial vehicle:

- The threshold for a UBAC offense is 0.015. Commercial drivers with a UBAC of 0.015 will be placed out of service for 24 hours.
- A UBAC between 0.04 and 0.07 will result in CDL suspensions or revocations, depending on the number of offenses.

Commercial drivers with one offense for operating a commercial vehicle while drunk will have their CDL suspended for one year; three years if they are transporting hazardous materials. A second or third offense will result in a revocation of their CDL for a minimum of 10 years. Their operator or chauffeur driver license may also be suspended or revoked. For more information, please refer to the Secretary of State's Commercial Driver License Manual.

Teen Drivers and Alcohol

Drivers between the ages of 16 and 20 are typically the least experienced drivers on the road. When alcohol is added to their inexperience, the results can be even more deadly. Male teenage drivers with a bodily alcohol content between 0.05 and 0.10 percent are 18 times more likely than a sober, male teen driver to be killed in a single vehicle crash. Female teenagers are 54 times more likely to be killed than a sober counterpart. Any involvement with alcohol by teens can result in the loss of their license. Simply possessing any alcoholic beverage, whether in a motor vehicle or not, can result in a license suspension for a teen.

For information about licensing actions for drivers under age 21, please see the Zero Tolerance section on pages 50–51.

Anti-Drug Laws

Michigan law requires driver license suspensions for drug convictions, even if you were not driving at the time of the offense. If there are no prior drug violations, your driver license is suspended for six months. No restricted license is allowed for the first 30 days. One or more prior drug convictions in seven years means your driver license will be suspended for one year. No restricted license is allowed for the first 60 days. The driver license reinstatement fee is \$125. This fee is separate from the reinstatement fee required for any other driving activity.

Repeat Offender Laws

Michigan's Repeat Offender laws are designed to get tough with drivers who repeatedly drive drunk or while on a suspended license. Under the laws, you are a Repeat Offender if you have:

- Two or more alcohol-related convictions within seven years.
- Three or more convictions for driving while your license is suspended or revoked in seven years.
- Three or more alcohol-related convictions within 10 years.

Penalties Under the Repeat Offender Laws

If you are arrested as a repeat offender, the law enforcement officer will destroy the metal license plate of the vehicle you are driving, whether you own the vehicle or not. A temporary paper license plate will be issued allowing the vehicle to be legally driven. A new metal license plate cannot be issued until your case is resolved in court.

Sanctions under the Repeat Offender laws include additional driver license suspensions or revocations, metal license plate confiscation, vehicle immobilization or forfeiture, registration denial, the use of ignition interlock devices, and mandatory substance abuse treatment. Repeat offenders who cause an accident resulting in a long-term injury or death are charged with a felony and face thousands of dollars in fines and years in jail in addition to other penalties.

Registration denial includes any vehicles that are registered, co-registered, leased, or co-leased. During registration denial, it is a crime to attempt to purchase, lease, or obtain a vehicle. Unless a circuit court order is requested and issued, you may not transfer a vehicle's registration to any family member if that vehicle is carrying a temporary plate, is immobilized, forfeited, or subject to registration denial. Registration denial continues until you are eligible for relicensing.

Please refer to the chart following this section for more information about offenders convicted of multiple alcohol or driving while license suspended (DWLS) offenses.

Driver License Actions

First Offense

OUIL/OUID/UBAC

- \$100 to \$500 fine and one or more of the following:
 - Up to 93 days in jail.
 - Up to 45 days community service.
- Driver license suspension for 30 days, followed by restrictions for 150 days.
- Possible vehicle immobilization.
- Six points on driver record.

OWI

- Up to \$300 fine and one or more of the following:
 - Up to 93 days in jail.
 - Up to 45 days community service.
- Driver license restriction for 90 days (180 days if impaired by controlled substance).
- Possible vehicle immobilization.
- Four points on driver record.

DWLS

- Up to \$500 fine, up to 93 days in jail, or both.
- Mandatory additional suspension.

Any combination, second offense within seven years

OUIL/OUID/UBAC

- \$200 to \$1,000 fine and one or more of the following:
 - Five days to one year in jail.
 - 30 to 90 days community service.
- Driver license denial/revocation for a minimum of one year.
- License plate confiscation.
- Vehicle immobilization 90 to 180 days unless vehicle is forfeited.
- Possible vehicle forfeiture.
- Six points on driver record.

OWI

- \$200 to \$1,000 fine and one or more of the following:
 - Five days to one year in jail.
 - 30 to 90 days community service.
- Driver license denial/revocation for a minimum one year.
- License plate confiscation.
- Vehicle immobilization 90 to 180 days unless vehicle is forfeited.
- Possible vehicle forfeiture.
- Four points on driver record.

DWLS

- Up to \$1,000 fine, up to one year in jail, or both.
- Mandatory additional suspension.
- Vehicle may be immobilized for up to 180 days.

Any combination, third offense within 10 years (felony)

OUIL/OUID/UBAC

- \$500 to \$5,000 fine and either:
 - One to five years imprisonment.
 - Probation with 30 days to one year in jail.
- 60 to 180 days community service.
- Driver license denial/revocation for a minimum five years.
- License plate confiscation.
- Vehicle immobilization one to three years unless vehicle is forfeited.
- Possible vehicle forfeiture.
- Registration denial.
- Six points on driver record.

OWI

- \$500 to \$5,000 fine and either:
 - One to five years in prison.
 - Probation with 30 days to one year in jail.
- 60 to 180 days community service.
- Driver license denial/revocation for a minimum of five years.

- License plate confiscation.
- Vehicle immobilization one to three years unless forfeited.
- Possible vehicle forfeiture.
- Registration denial.
- Four points on driver record.

DWLS (third offense—must have two priors within seven years—misdemeanor)

- Mandatory additional suspension.
- License plate confiscation.
- Vehicle immobilized 90 to 180 days.

DWLS (fourth offense—must have three priors within seven years—misdemeanor)

- Same as for third offense.

DWLS (fifth offense—must have four priors within seven years—misdemeanor)

- Mandatory additional suspension.
- License plate confiscation.
- Vehicle immobilized one to three years.

First offense

OUIL/OUID/UBAC/OWI/DWLS causing death/serious injury (felony)

- **Death**—Up to 15 years imprisonment OR
 - \$2,500 to \$10,000 fine, or both.
- **Injury**—Up to five years imprisonment OR
 - \$1,000 to \$5,000 fine, or both.
- **Emergency Responder Death**—Up to 20 years imprisonment OR
 - \$2,500 to \$10,000 fine, or both
- Driver license denial/revocation for a minimum of one year.
- License plate confiscation.
- Vehicle immobilization up to 180 days unless forfeited.
- Possible vehicle forfeiture.

Second offense (any prior crime within seven years)

OUIL/OUID/UBAC/OWI/DWLS causing death/serious injury (felony)

- **Death**—Up to 15 years imprisonment OR
 - \$2,500 to \$10,000 fine, or both.
- **Injury**—Up to five years imprisonment OR
 - \$1,000 to \$5,000 fine, or both.
- **Emergency Responder Death**—Up to 20 years imprisonment OR
 - \$2,500 to \$10,000 fine, or both.
- Driver license denial/revocation for a minimum of five years.
- License plate confiscation.
- Vehicle immobilization 90 to 180 days unless vehicle is forfeited.
- Possible vehicle forfeiture.

Open Intoxicants in a Motor Vehicle

- Up to a \$100 fine.
- First offense—no action is taken against driver license.
- Second offense—driver license is suspended for 30 days/restricted for 60 days.
- Third offense—driver license is suspended for 60 days/restricted for 305 days.
- Alcohol screening may be required.
- Two points on driver record.

Zero Tolerance (under age 21)

First Offense

- Up to \$250 fine and/or
 - Up to 45 days community service.
- Driver license is restricted for 30 days.
- Four points on driver record.

Second Offense within seven years

- Up to \$500 fine and/or
 - Up to 60 days community service.
 - Up to 93 days in jail.

- Driver license suspension 90 days. Any prior drunk driving conviction results in a minimum one-year driver license revocation.
- Four points on driver record.

Person Under 21 purchase/consume/possess alcohol

- First offense—\$100 fine, no action is taken against driver license.
- Second offense—\$200 fine, driver license is suspended for 30 days/restricted for 60 days.
- Third offense—\$500 fine, driver license is suspended for 60 days/restricted for 305 days.
- Community service may be required.
- Alcohol screening may be required.

Person Under 21 transport or possess in a motor vehicle

- Up to a \$100 fine.
- First offense—no action is taken against driver license.
- Second offense—driver license is suspended for 30 days/restricted for 60 days.
- Third offense—driver license is suspended for 60 days/restricted for 305 days.
- Alcohol screening may be required.
- Community service may be required.
- Two points on driver record.
- Vehicle can be impounded up to 30 days.

Use Fraudulent ID to Purchase Liquor

- Up to a \$100 fine, 93 days in jail, or both.
- 90-day driver license suspension.
- Alcohol screening may be required.

6 Safety Belts, Safety Seats, and Air Bags

Click It or Ticket: Michigan requires all drivers and passengers to be properly buckled up. Under the law, a vehicle may be stopped by a law enforcement officer and the driver ticketed if the occupants are not properly buckled up. Please review the information in this section and obey Michigan's safety belt and child-safety restraint laws.

Buckle Up — It's the Law!

In a motor vehicle crash safety belts keep people in their seats, reducing the risk of serious injury and death. By law, everyone in the front seat of a motor vehicle must wear a safety belt. Children under age 16 must be buckled up regardless of where they are seated. Be responsible—make sure all passengers are properly buckled up. Even if the vehicle is equipped with air bags, they are not a substitute for wearing a safety belt. By wearing a properly adjusted safety belt—over the shoulder with no slack and low across the hips—everyone will be safer.

- Being thrown from a vehicle because you were not wearing a safety belt greatly increases your chances of dying in a traffic crash. Wearing a lap-shoulder belt reduces chances of serious injury by 70 percent and death by 50 percent.
- If you are pregnant, you and your unborn child are much safer when a safety belt is worn low across the hips. By protecting yourself from injury, your unborn child is also protected.
- The chances of being knocked unconscious or seriously injured are much less when wearing a safety belt. If there is danger from fire or water, escape can quickly be made. If the vehicle skids out of control, you will remain behind

the wheel and have a better chance of regaining control. Drivers exempt from using a safety belt because of a medical condition must carry a doctor's statement.

Protecting Children and Teens

Since the Michigan Child Passenger Protection Law was enacted, use of child restraints and safety belts has increased, while deaths and injuries have decreased. However, many people use child restraint devices improperly. Make certain both the child safety restraint and your child are properly buckled before you drive.

Young people under age 18 are no longer allowed to ride in the open bed of a pickup truck traveling more than 15 mph. The law allows exceptions for vehicles used by farmers, construction workers, the military, in parades, and by authorized emergency and rescue personnel.

Law Sets Special Requirements

- Children under the age of four must be in approved safety seats, wherever they are seated. For children less than 20 pounds, the child or infant seat must face the rear of the vehicle, according to the standard in the Code of Federal Regulations. However, rear-facing infant seats should never be placed in the front passenger seat of a vehicle equipped with air bags. Inflating air bags can seriously injure or suffocate the child. The safest place for a child in a passenger vehicle is in the middle of the back seat, properly buckled.
- Children ages 4 to 15 must be protected by a safety belt in the front or back seats.
- The driver and all front seat passengers must wear a safety belt.
- Never hold a child on your lap or buckle a child with another passenger into one safety belt.
- Always insist children buckle their safety belts before starting the engine.

- Wear the safety belt properly, snug and low across the hips.
- Install and use safety seats according to the manufacturer's instructions found in the owner's manual.

Approved safety seats are available at low or no cost at many community agencies such as local public health departments. Avoid buying second-hand seats as they may not meet federal safety standards, may not work properly, or may have missing parts or instructions. And, if there is a recall, you may not receive notification.

Air Bags

Most new vehicles have air bags to provide vehicle occupants extra protection in a crash. Air bags are stored in the steering wheel or dashboard and inflate during a serious crash, usually a frontal crash that occurs at over 10 m.p.h. In one-tenth of a second, the air bag inflates to provide a protective cushion between the person and the steering wheel, dashboard, and windshield. For the best protection always wear a safety belt, even in vehicles equipped with air bags. Safety belts remain the best protection in rollover, side impact, and rear-end crashes.

- Parents are cautioned never to put a child in a rear-facing infant seat in the front passenger seat of a vehicle equipped with an air bag. If the air bag deploys, the blow to the back of the seat could hurt the child.
- Parents are encouraged to seat all children age 12 and under in the rear seat of the vehicle to avoid potential injury from an air bag in the event of a crash.



7 Signs, Pavement Markings, and Signals

Signs, pavement markings, and signals are all ways of communicating. They provide information about regulations, highway routes, directions, places of interest, and cautions. They include regulatory, warning, and guide signs. This section presents important information about signs, pavement markings, and signals. Obeying signs, traffic signals, and markings will help to keep you safe.

Signs

Regulatory Signs

Regulatory signs that control moving traffic are always red and white or black and white. “Do Not Enter,” “Wrong Way,” “Yield,” and “Stop,” are examples of signs with red backgrounds. Regulatory signs that control parking may be green and white.

The yield sign indicates a driver must slow down and give way to all traffic and pedestrians.



The shape of this sign indicates stop. Stop and give the right-of-way to pedestrians and all cross traffic before moving forward. You must stop behind a marked or unmarked crosswalk that joins sidewalks on opposite sides of the street, or behind a marked stop line. If there is no pavement marking or crosswalk, stop before entering the intersection, where traffic coming from all directions is visible.



A red circle with a line through it always means “no,, such as “no entry,,

This sign means do not turn around in the middle of a street or an intersection.



These two signs are sometimes used together and mean do not pass. The yellow pennant sign will be posted on the left side of the road. The white sign will be posted on the right side.

This sign follows the do not pass sign. It is on the right side of the road. It marks the end of a no-passing zone. You may then pass when it is safe to do so.



This sign means traffic in the right lane must turn right. Traffic in the second lane should either continue driving straight or turn right. A similar sign may be used for left-turning traffic.

This sign means no right turn. The arrow pointed to the left means no left turn.



This sign informs or warns not to drive across the median (divider strip) or emergency crossover of a freeway. It is against the law for anyone to cross a freeway median—except for law enforcement, emergency, or maintenance vehicles. To change directions on a freeway, drive to the next exit, get off, and re-enter the freeway in the other direction.



This sign directs traffic to the right of an obstruction.

This sign is posted over a highway lane that is used only for making a left turn. Traffic from both directions will be using this lane. Never use a turning lane to overtake and pass other vehicles.



Located at intersections, this sign means do not turn until the light turns green.

This type of sign shows the fastest and slowest speeds allowed on a freeway, weather permitting. On most roads, only the fastest speed allowed is shown.



Warning Signs

Warning signs in construction, maintenance, or other designated work areas are black on orange or black on yellow. Both types of signs are diamond-shaped.

Signs like this provide advisory speeds at freeway exit and entrance ramps. They show the maximum recommended safe speed to drive on a ramp in ideal weather conditions.

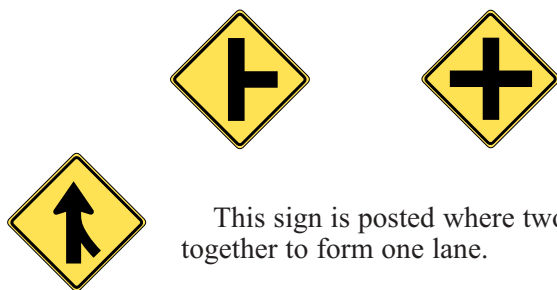


These signs warn of a curve or sharp turn ahead. If the curve is too sharp to drive at the posted speed limit, an advisory speed sign is attached to indicate the fastest recommended speed in ideal weather conditions. Slow down before entering the curve.



If the speed limit is not posted before a curve, judge how sharp the curve is and change speed accordingly. If you cannot see around a curve, slow down more than normal. When driving around a curve, the vehicle will tend to move to the outside of the curve.

These signs show an upcoming side or cross road. Look for other vehicles entering or leaving the highway.



This sign is posted where two lanes come together to form one lane.

These signs mean a lane ends ahead, and a driver must merge into the proper lane. However, yield the right-of-way to vehicles already in the left lane, or in the right lane in the case of a “lane ends merge right,, sign.





This sign shows the road ahead has two-way traffic.

This sign warns of a steep hill. You may need to slow down at the top or change to a lower gear.



This sign cautions that a section of the roadway may be more slippery when weather conditions are bad. Make sure to slow down when the road is wet or icy.

This sign marks a traffic island or obstruction. Drive to either side.



This sign is used to remind drivers that they are going from a divided highway to a two-way roadway.



This sign informs or warns you that a bridge or underpass is ahead with a clearance of only 12 feet, 6 inches. Know the height of the vehicle and load.



This sign means no trucks allowed.

This sign means prepare to stop ahead.





Slow-Moving Vehicles

This sign on the back of a slow-moving vehicle is a warning to slow down. It means the vehicle cannot travel faster than 25 mph. Do not get impatient if behind one of these vehicles. The driver will usually try to pull over to the side whenever possible to prevent traffic back-ups.

Guide Signs



Guide signs, including those for motorist services, parks, and public recreation areas, tell what is available ahead. Some show distance, destination, and direction.



Route Markers

Route markers identify highways by number and symbol as part of national, state, or local systems.

Limited-access interstate freeway sign



U.S. highway sign



State highway sign



County route marker



Pavement Markings

Pavement markings are white or yellow and, like highway signs, warn, regulate, and inform drivers.

White lines separate traffic lanes moving in the same direction. They include:

- **Broken white lines:** On roadways that have more than one lane moving in one direction, broken white lines separate traffic lanes. Drive between these lines. Never straddle them.
- **Solid white lines:** Solid white lines mark the right edge of the road. Often called fog lines, solid white lines help you stay on the road at night or in bad weather. Passing to the right of another vehicle by crossing a solid white line that marks the right edge of the roadway is prohibited, even if the shoulder is paved.



Solid white lines are also used to separate lanes of traffic moving in the same direction. When solid white lines separate lanes of traffic moving in the same direction, crossing a solid white line is not recommended. These white lines may designate sharp curves, freeway acceleration and deceleration lanes, and other parts of the road where lane changes are considered dangerous.

A double solid white line is used to show a travel path where driving in the same direction is permitted on both sides of the line, but crossing the line is prohibited.

These lines are used to separate traffic for safety reasons such as bicycle ways, pedestrian ways, or where one lane of traffic is usually traveling at a higher speed than the other lane:

- **Crosswalk lines:** Solid white lines mark many pedestrian crosswalks. When these lines are used, they go all the way across the pavement. Notice them at intersections and, sometimes, between intersections. Stop the vehicle behind the crosswalk line.
- **Stop lines:** Wide white lines painted across a traffic lane mark where you must stop the vehicle at intersections. This keeps the vehicle out of the way of pedestrians and cross traffic. If there are no stop lines or crosswalks, stop the vehicle before entering the intersection. You should be able to see traffic from all directions.

Yellow lines separate vehicle traffic lanes moving in opposite directions. They include:

- **Broken yellow lines:** A single broken yellow line usually marks the centerline of a two-way roadway where a vehicle may pass, if it is safe.
- **Solid yellow lines:** If a solid yellow line is on your side of the centerline of a roadway, do not cross over it to pass. On a four-lane divided roadway or a one-way road, a solid yellow line usually marks the left edge of the pavement. A double solid yellow line down the middle of a two-lane roadway means that passing is not allowed for vehicles traveling in either direction.
- **Center lane, left-turn-only:** Many roads have a left-turn-only lane to help traffic flow more smoothly. Each outside edge of this lane is marked with a solid yellow line with broken yellow lines on the inside edges. Left turns must be made from within this lane, and may be made from either direction. Using this lane to pass other vehicles or as a merge lane is both dangerous and illegal.

Signals

Traffic signals control traffic at intersections. Do not drive across public or private property, such as a store parking lot, to avoid a traffic control device. Combinations of traffic signals, signs, pavement markings, and other traffic control devices may be used at railroad crossings, schools, street and highway construction, and maintenance operations. Pedestrian signals control pedestrian traffic. Always give the right-of-way to pedestrians.

Traffic Control Signals



A red light means stop. It is at the top of a traffic signal in Michigan. Stop the vehicle behind a crosswalk or stop line. A yellow light means the green signal has ended and the signal is about to turn red. You are required to stop on a yellow light. If you cannot stop safely, do not speed up but drive cautiously through the intersection. A green light means proceed cautiously after checking for pedestrians and vehicles.



A flashing red light means come to a full stop. Proceed when the road is clear.



A flashing yellow light means proceed carefully through the intersection. Scan cross traffic in both directions.



A steady green arrow means you may proceed with caution in the direction of the arrow if the way is clear. Yield the right-of-way to pedestrians in the intersection. Traffic coming toward you should stop.

Railroad Crossings

Traffic control systems for railroad crossings include all signs, signals, markings, and illuminated devices that permit safe and efficient movement of both rail and highway traffic. Trains cannot stop at railroad crossings. It is much harder and takes much longer for a train to stop, up to a mile in most cases. It could be fatal to ignore a signal or try to cross in front of a train.

When approaching a railroad crossing that does not have a signal or a gate, slow down and look both ways. This is good advice even if a signaled crossing does not indicate a train is coming.



This sign warns of a railroad crossing ahead. If a train is coming, do not stop more than 50 feet or less than 10 feet from the tracks. If you are operating a school bus or a vehicle carrying hazardous materials, do not stop more than 50 feet or less than 15 feet from the tracks.

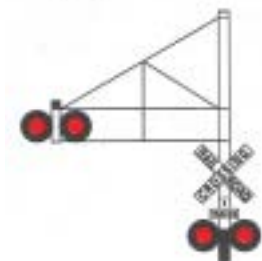
If there is more than one set of tracks, check carefully for other trains that may be coming. Do not cross the tracks until all trains have passed. When the road is snow covered, proceed over tracks with enough speed so you will not get stuck. Avoid changing gears while crossing the tracks.

When you see devices that warn of railroad crossings and possible oncoming trains:

- Slow down and be ready to stop.
- School buses, vehicles carrying passengers for hire, gasoline trucks, and other vehicles carrying hazardous materials must stop and make sure no train is coming, even if there is no stop sign or railroad crossing signal.
- If there is a stop sign at the crossing, you must stop.
- Be careful not to get “trapped,” on railroad tracks by a line of vehicles backed up by a traffic signal.



This railroad sign means slow down. Do not cross the track(s) without checking in both directions for a train. Be sure tracks are clear for a safe distance. If there are two or more tracks, the number will be indicated.



This railroad crossing signal has a bell and flashing red lights to warn that a train is coming. Stop when the bell is ringing and the lights are flashing.

This railroad crossing has a sign, signal, bell, and gate to stop traffic. Do not drive through, around, or under any crossing gate while it is down, or being raised or lowered. Stop and wait until the gates are raised, signals stop flashing, and bells stop ringing.



School Areas



This sign means that school children may be crossing. Slow down and watch for them. Traffic controls near school areas may include school crosswalk lines, stop lines, curb markings, word and symbol markings, special school speed limits, and school crosswalk signs.

Watch for adult crossing guards and student safety patrols helping children cross streets safely.

Vehicles must stop for crossing guards with a stop sign upraised, and may not continue until the crossing guard has moved completely out of the intersection.

Construction and Maintenance

A combination of orange signs with black lettering, signals, lighting devices, markings, barricades, routing, and hand-signaling devices may be used around road construction, maintenance, and surveying operations and utility work.



When you see orange and black signs like these, they may mean the entire road, a single lane, or a portion of a lane is blocked.

These signs are also used when work is being done adjacent to the roadway, on shoulders, or in ditch areas.

Construction zones can be for a short period of time or last one or more construction seasons. Drivers are made aware of such zones by advanced signing regarding traffic shifts due to lane or roadway closures.

Be aware of the warning sign messages and obey them as directed. Do not wait until the last possible moment to merge into a lane of traffic. Forced merges are as discourteous as they are dangerous. Watch and drive defensively to avoid problems. Be patient and everyone will travel through the construction zones safely.

When going through a designated work area where a full traffic lane or part of a traffic lane is closed for construction, maintenance, or surveying activities, the speed limit is 45 m.p.h. unless posted differently. **Fines are double for all moving violations in work zones.**

Motorists causing injury or death to roadside construction workers or operators of farm equipment are subject to fines of up to \$7,500 and imprisonment of up to 15 years.

Pedestrian Signals

Pedestrian signals are used to control pedestrian traffic with the words WALK and DONT WALK, or the green or white symbol of a walking person, that means to walk, and a red upraised hand, that means do not walk.



Single Section with Cut-out Letters



Two Section Types

A pedestrian should not start to cross when the DONT WALK is flashing, but if already partway across should complete crossing. Be cautious when pedestrians are present, especially when turning. Traffic islands help separate moving traffic or guide traffic and also provide safety for pedestrians.

8 Basic Skills, Laws, and Safety

This section provides information about basic skills, laws and safety, with tips for preparing to drive, controlling speed, signaling, yielding, turning at intersections and at red lights, using lanes, passing, freeway driving, parking, and using cruise control. Safe driving requires that you understand and use these basic skills.

Some Basic Driving Tips

The following tips can help you drive safely.

- Drive defensively.
- Concentrate on your driving.
- Obey all traffic control devices and traffic laws.
- Be courteous to others.
- Communicate your intentions to others.
- Be aware and keep alert. Even though you follow the laws, realize others may not.
- Recognize that you share the road with others whether they are walking, bicycling, or driving.
- Avoid looking at any one thing for more than a few seconds.
- Watch for vehicles coming from alleys or parking places when driving in a business district.
- Always give yourself enough time and space to do what you need to do safely. Never follow another vehicle too closely.
- Be more careful and increase your following distance at night, during bad weather conditions, rush hour, during

maneuvers such as lane changes, and when approaching intersections.

- Do not drive when you are tired.
- Always obey a law enforcement officer's orders or directions. Their directions take priority over a traffic light or stop sign.

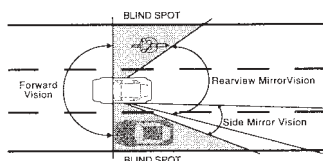
Preparing to Drive

Before operating a vehicle:

- Check for clean headlights, taillights, and brake lights. Make sure all lights and turn signals work properly.
- Clean the windshield and windows.
- Check the tires for proper air pressure and for any possible damage.
- Check in front and behind the vehicle for objects, animals, or persons in your path.

Before starting the engine:

- Make sure you are positioned comfortably in the driver's seat.
- Make sure you and all passengers, including children, are properly buckled up.
- Check mirrors and check again for anything in your path. As a driver, you have at least two blind spots or areas around your vehicle that you cannot see in your rearview or side-view mirrors—to the left rear and right rear of the vehicle. Make sure the inside rearview mirror is properly adjusted so you can see the center of the road and any traffic behind the vehicle. Adjust the left outside mirror to see the left edge of the vehicle when seated in a normal



driving position. If there is a right outside mirror, adjust it to permit a clear view of the right rear edge of the vehicle.

- Turn your head to check the blind spots before every lane change. You cannot get rid of blind spots, but can make them smaller by properly adjusting the mirrors.
- Know the type of braking system installed in your vehicle. If it has antilock brakes, be sure to read and follow the instructions in the owner's manual.

Controlling Your Speed

Michigan's Basic Speed Law means you must drive at a "careful and prudent,, speed in all driving conditions. You must drive at a speed that always allows you to stop within the clear distance ahead. This speed is never faster than the posted speed limit. Depending on conditions, it may be slower than the posted speed limit. Anticipate trouble ahead. Be ready to stop safely.

Speed Limits

Watch for and obey regulatory speed signs that tell you the safe or suggested speed. Unless posted otherwise, the fastest speed you may drive is:

- 15 mph—In mobile home parks and on some roads adjacent to parks and playgrounds.
- 25 mph—In business and residential areas and in parks.
- 45 mph—When entering and passing through a designated work area where a normal lane or part of the lane is closed for construction, maintenance, or surveying activities.
- 55 mph—On Michigan's highways.
- 70 mph—On freeways—45 mph is the minimum speed. School buses and trucks are restricted to 55 mph on limited access highways and freeways.

Give Yourself Time and Space to Stop

Your stopping distance can be affected by fatigue, how well you pay attention, the type and weight of your vehicle, the condition of your tires and brakes, the type of road surface, and the weather. Try to estimate how much time and space you have for stopping on either dry or wet pavement.

The “two-second rule,, is an easy way to tell if you are following too closely. It works at any speed. When the rear of the vehicle ahead passes a sign or any other stationary point, find the time it takes you to reach the same spot by counting “one-thousand one, one-thousand two.,, You are following too closely if you pass the mark before you finish counting two seconds.

Wet pavement requires more stopping time and space. To make a smooth stop, increase pressure on the brake pedal gradually and just before you stop, reduce the pressure.

Look Down the Road 12 Seconds

This rule means always look ahead of the vehicle about 12 seconds worth of travel time down the road. To estimate this distance, choose a fixed object near the road ahead and begin counting, “one-thousand one, one thousand two..., until the front of your vehicle passes the object. If you have not counted to “one-thousand twelve,, you should be looking farther ahead.

A defensive driver anticipates problems ahead and is prepared to react in time. Keep a safe distance behind another vehicle. Under poor or slippery driving conditions, allow even more time.

Signaling

Signaling is a legal requirement and a courtesy. Before stopping, turning, or changing lanes, see if it is safe. Communicate to other drivers by giving the required signal, either using your left hand and arm, or your vehicle’s turn signal. Signal at least 100 feet ahead of where you plan to turn. In heavy traffic or on freeways, signal sooner so drivers behind you have time to adjust their speed.

The proper hand and arm signals are:

Left arm and hand
bent up for a right turn



Left arm and hand
straight out for a left turn



Left arm and hand bent
down for slow or stop



Yielding

Most crashes occur at intersections. Always remember—any time you are not sure what other drivers are going to do, let them go first.

- When approaching intersections without traffic signals or signs, or four-way stop intersections, yield to the driver on the right if you reach the intersection at the same time as another vehicle. Yield to any vehicle that reaches an intersection before you.
- When making left turns, you must give the right-of-way to pedestrians and oncoming traffic.
- When approaching an intersection with a yield sign, slow down before reaching the intersection, then yield



the right-of-way to any vehicle in the intersection and to cross traffic. Stop if necessary.



Yielding in Other Circumstances

Before entering an intersection, always check cross traffic. Prepare to stop and yield the right-of-way to a vehicle coming from the left or right, or to pedestrians in the intersection.

- You must also yield when directed by a uniformed law enforcement officer and when directed by flag people at construction sites.
- You must yield for vehicles in a funeral procession.
- You must stop and yield the right-of-way when entering a highway from an alley, private road, or driveway and before turning on a red light.
- When entering a traffic circle you must yield the right-of-way to drivers already in the circle.
- When entering an intersection at dusk, sunrise, or sunset, use extra care as other drivers may have difficulty seeing you.
- You must yield to emergency vehicles, approaching from any direction or if stopped, when their lights are flashing. Time is critical in an emergency situation. Pulling over and allowing emergency vehicles to reach their destination as quickly and safely as possible may save a life.

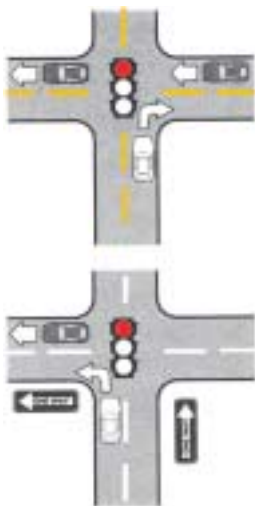
Turning at Intersections

As you approach an intersection, look for traffic signals and lane markings.

- Look and plan ahead. Be alert for pedestrians and vehicles that may disregard a red light and proceed through an intersection without stopping. Allow time and space to make your turn safely.
- When turning left at an intersection, check cross traffic and yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians.
- When turning right at an intersection, check the road you are turning onto for pedestrians and other vehicles.
- After turning left onto a one-way street, stay in the left lane until you can change lanes safely.
- If you come to an intersection where you cannot see clearly because of trees or buildings, stop at the intersection and edge forward slowly.
- If you have entered an intersection when the signal light changes, complete your turn. Do not try to back up in an effort to avoid blocking the intersection.

Right Turns on Red Lights

Unless a sign tells you “no turn on red,” you may turn right at a red light after coming to a complete stop. You must yield to pedestrians and approaching traffic. Make sure after you look to the left for approaching vehicles and pedestrians, that you also check again for pedestrians in front of you before turning. Then turn carefully.



Some Left Turns on Red Lights

Unless a sign tells you “no turn on red,” you may turn left on a red light when entering a one-way street from another one-way street, but you must first stop and yield to cross traffic.

You may also make a left turn from a two-way street onto a one-way street with traffic going in the same direction as the turn. Yield first to pedestrians and approaching traffic.



Passing

When passing other vehicles, always check your rearview and side-view mirrors for any overtaking traffic. Use your turn signal to indicate your intentions. Check blind spots by turning your head to see if you can safely move from your lane without interfering with traffic.

It is illegal to exceed the speed limit to pass. When about to pass a vehicle on a divided highway, move into the passing lane well before passing.

Passing on the Left

On a two- or three-lane road with traffic moving in both directions, you may pass on the left when overtaking another vehicle if there are no signs or other markings prohibiting passing, and it can be done safely. Passing another vehicle on the left is prohibited when:

- You must cross a solid yellow line.
- There is a “no passing,” sign.
- Approaching a hill or curve where your view is obstructed.
- Your view is obstructed within 100 feet of a bridge, viaduct, or tunnel.
- Oncoming traffic is close enough so you would interfere with the safe operation of the approaching vehicle or the vehicle being passed.
- You cannot see clearly ahead.

When passing or preparing to pass another vehicle by using the center lane of a three-lane road, always use extreme caution. Approaching vehicles may also be preparing to pass. If you and an approaching vehicle move into the center lane at the same time, a serious crash could occur.

After passing another vehicle, return to the right lane when there is enough room to return safely. One rule of thumb is to return to your lane when it is possible to see both headlights of the vehicle you passed in the rearview mirror.

Remember to allow extra room when pulling a trailer. Do not try to pass more than one vehicle at a time or follow too closely when another vehicle is passing slower traffic.

A driver being passed on the left must give way to the passing vehicle. Do not increase speed until the other vehicle has completely passed.

Passing on the Right

When two or more lanes of traffic are moving in the same direction, passing other vehicles in either lane is allowed. However, slower moving vehicles should always stay in the lane farthest to the right except when preparing to make a left turn.

When driving in the right lane, passing another vehicle should be done cautiously, as the driver of the other vehicle may not see you and may turn into your path. Passing on the right of another vehicle by crossing the solid white line that marks the edge of the roadway is prohibited, even if the shoulder is paved.

Passing Parked Vehicles

When driving past parked vehicles, watch for vehicles that may pull out in front of you. Look for clues, such as a person in the driver's seat, exhaust coming from a tailpipe, illuminated brake lights, a flashing turn signal, illuminated backup lights, or at parallel parking areas, a vehicle's front wheels turning out. Watch for a vehicle door being opened in front of you. Also, watch for pedestrians or bicyclists trying to cross the road between parked vehicles.

Passing Vehicles in Slow-Moving Traffic Lanes

In some areas with a long or steep grade, a slow-moving traffic lane may be provided to allow vehicles that are unable to maintain the speed limit to travel without blocking traffic.

These slower-moving vehicles should move into the designated traffic lane, allowing other vehicles to pass them in the second lane.

Freeway Driving

Freeways are our safest roads. Traffic flows in the same direction. There are no stops or intersections. Pedestrians, small motorcycles of 125 cc or less, mopeds, bicycles, all-terrain vehicles, and slow-moving vehicles are not allowed on freeways.

A freeway is entered on an entrance ramp. Often, an exit ramp will be next to the entrance ramp. Look for “Do Not Enter,” and “Wrong Way,” signs and speed limit signs. The entrance ramp usually merges into an acceleration lane allowing you to increase your speed to match freeway traffic speed.

Signal and check for freeway traffic by using the vehicle’s rearview and side-view mirrors and quick glances over your shoulder. Choose a safe space to enter and then merge into traffic. Traffic on the freeway has the right-of-way. Do not count on other drivers to let you in.

- On a two-lane freeway, drive in the right lane except when passing, exiting to the left, allowing another vehicle to merge onto the freeway, or when the lanes are fully occupied with heavily congested traffic.
- On a freeway with three or more lanes of travel in the same direction, you may drive in any lane, however, if driving at or near the minimum speed limit, drivers should stay in the lane with the slower moving traffic. A commercial vehicle with a gross vehicle weight of more than 10,000 pounds, a truck tractor, or a combination vehicle with a trailer must stay in either of the two lanes farthest to the right, unless otherwise designated.

- Merge signs are placed near freeway entrances to alert you to traffic entering the freeway. Always watch for vehicles merging onto the freeway. Adjusting your speed or moving safely into another lane will allow drivers to enter the freeway smoothly and safely.
- Always watch for drivers who suddenly slow down when approaching an exit or swerve into the exit lane unexpectedly.

Leaving a Freeway

Most freeway exits have a special deceleration lane to slow down in when exiting the freeway. Look ahead for exit ramp signs you want and the lane you must use. Check in front, behind, and to the side for traffic. Signal your intention early and then move into the proper lane.

Avoid slowing down on the freeway when exiting. Wait until you are fully in the deceleration lane before reducing your speed, and then slow down gradually. Many ramps have sharp curves, so it is important to obey the posted exit ramp speed limit.

If you miss your exit ramp, never back up, turn around, or use a median crossover. Instead, drive to the next exit. Get back on the freeway and return to the exit you want. Never use the crossover lane in the median. It is only for emergency and Michigan Department of Transportation vehicles.

Fatigue

One of the greatest dangers in freeway driving is fatigue. On long trips you can become sleepy or hypnotized by the constant hum of the wind, tires, and engine. If necessary, let someone else drive. Do not rely on coffee or “stay awake,” drugs.

If you feel tired, stop and rest for a 10-minute break at least every two hours. Pull off the highway at the next exit. Find a motel or rest area and relax.

If you must drive, keep shifting your eyes from one area of the road to another. Keep checking the mirrors. Look at objects near and far, left and right.

Cruise Control

Cruise control is best suited for use in rural areas where there is not much traffic. Set the cruise control at or below the posted speed limit. This steady pace saves gasoline and allows for acceleration to pass slower moving vehicles without blocking the left lane for extended periods. Acceleration does not cancel the cruise control setting—depressing the brake pedal will.

Using cruise control in heavy traffic, near large numbers of exit and entrance ramps, or when roads are slippery from rain, snow, or ice is not recommended. This could require the constant resetting of the cruise control to the point you are distracted, increasing your risk of being involved in a crash. Most vehicle manufacturers do not recommend using cruise control when towing heavy loads.

Parking Your Vehicle

Crashes sometimes occur because people did not park their vehicles properly. Whenever you park and leave your vehicle, always turn off the engine and set the parking brake. Take the keys and lock your vehicle. Do not rely on the transmission to hold your vehicle in place. Exiting your vehicle into the street can be dangerous. Watch for bicycles, motorcycles, mopeds, or other vehicles that might be passing. Check the mirrors before opening the door for traffic that may not see you. When returning to your vehicle, face oncoming traffic as you approach the driver's side.

Parking on a Hill

To park on a hill, turn the tires so that if the unattended vehicle starts to roll, it moves into the curb. Always use the parking brake. You cannot expect the transmission to hold your vehicle on a hill.

Parking Violations

Communities may pass parking ordinances for local streets that are stricter than state law. Signs will be posted at the city limits. The owner of a vehicle parked illegally is responsible for any parking tickets. If the vehicle is being leased, the person leasing it is responsible. The following is a partial list of “no parking laws.,,

Never Park:



- Where “no stopping,,, “no standing,,, “no parking,,, and “no parking at any time,, signs are posted.
- Within 500 feet of a fire or a crash.
- In a space reserved for the disabled, unless you are properly using a disability license plate or placard.
- Within 15 feet of a fire hydrant.
- Within 20 feet of a fire station driveway on the same side of the street or, when marked, within 75 feet of the driveway on the other side of the street.
- Within 50 feet of the nearest rail of a railroad crossing.
- In front of any driveway, alley, theater, emergency exit, or fire escape.
- Next to a road where you block the view of drivers turning at an intersection.
- More than 12 inches from the curb.
- Within 30 feet of a stop sign, traffic light, or flashing beacon, including a warning sign.
- In a lane of a highway outside city or village limits if there is a highway shoulder.
- On a bridge or overpass, under a bridge, or in a tunnel.
- On a sidewalk or in front of a public or private driveway.
- Within an intersection or crosswalk.

- Within 20 feet of a marked crosswalk or 15 feet of an intersection if there is no crosswalk.
- On the street-side of a legally parked vehicle (double parking).
- In a manner that obstructs delivery of mail to a rural mailbox.

How to Help Reduce Auto Theft/Carjacking

Auto theft costs motorists millions of dollars each year. Be aware of your surroundings, especially who is around your vehicle, whether you are driving or leaving your vehicle in a parking lot. When parking your vehicle, park in a well-lighted lot, close all windows, keep expensive goods out of sight and locked up, remove the keys, and lock the vehicle. Consider buying a vehicle alarm. To report auto theft, telephone the police. Then telephone HEAT (Help Eliminate Auto Thefts) at 800/242-HEAT.

In a carjacking, one or more people take a car from the owner by force. Sometimes, they stage a minor rear-end incident called a “bump and run,” at a traffic light or stop sign. When you get out to inspect the damage, one person robs you while the other steals your vehicle. If you are confronted with this situation, stay in your car. Wait for police or drive to an area where help is available. If you are threatened, prepare to drive on.

Other Safety Tips

- Keep your vehicle in good working condition.
- Have your vehicle identification number (VIN) chemically etched on the car window and main parts to help prevent your car from being stolen for parts.
- Alarms and interlocks to prevent other kinds of car theft can also discourage amateur carjackers.
- Tell people your route and estimated time of arrival at your beginning and ending stops.

- When driving, keep doors and windows locked. Stay alert for danger. If available, take freeways rather than streets through high-crime areas.
- Close a sunroof at night and in high-risk areas.
- Do not get out to fix a flat tire. Try to drive slowly to a service station or store with a well-lighted parking lot and telephone for service.
- Choose the safest route to any destination. Park as close to that destination as possible.
- Always have keys ready when returning to the car. While you are still outside the car, check the interior for possible intruders.
- If someone acting suspiciously approaches your vehicle, try to drive away or sound the horn.
- In case of danger, stay inside the locked car.
- If you are in trouble, use a cellular telephone if available.
- If a carjacker wants the vehicle, give it up without a fight. A car can be replaced, but personal safety is priceless. Stay calm. Get a good description of the carjackers.

9

Sharing the Road Safely — Be Courteous!

Drivers of all ages need to be concerned with traffic laws, courtesy, and safety. This section reminds you that you share the road with a variety of traffic such as commercial trucks, emergency vehicles, motorcycles, mopeds, bicyclists, and pedestrians. It is important to be patient with all who use the road. This section will help you understand how to drive in a manner that reduces the risk of a traffic crash and the risk of road rage.

Safe driving involves more than learning the basics of operating a vehicle and memorizing the rules of the road. Safe driving also requires good judgment and reflexes, experience, patience, and common sense.

A young driver's understanding and judgment may not be as well developed as an experienced driver's. Middle-aged drivers may grow complacent about their driving ability after years of driving. Older drivers have years of experience on the road, but may face challenges brought about by losses in vision, hearing, attentiveness, decision-making ability, or reaction time. Research indicates older drivers can improve their driving ability through additional training, enabling them to maintain their driver license while driving safely. Some communities offer driving skill programs for older drivers.

Distracted Driving

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates driver distractions account for 25 percent to 30 percent of the 6.5 million crashes recorded nationally every year. Even seemingly simple tasks such as tuning a radio can be risky, especially in bad weather or heavy traffic. In the estimated quarter of a second it takes the brain to shift

attention between two tasks, a car going 65 mph covers 24 feet. Here are ways you can minimize in-vehicle distractions:

- If you use a cellular phone, use an imbedded or hands-free model. Don't make or accept calls during demanding driving situations such as heavy traffic, winding roads, or bad weather. Don't take notes or look up phone numbers while driving. Avoid stressful or confrontational conversations.
- Pre-program your favorite radio stations for easy access and arrange tapes and CDs in an easy-to-reach spot.
- Designate a front-seat passenger to serve as a "co-pilot,, rather than fumble with maps or navigation systems. If you are driving alone, map out destinations in advance.
- If you can't avoid eating while driving, choose easy-to-handle items and make sure all drinks are secured in cup holders.
- Teach children the importance of good behavior while in a vehicle. Don't underestimate how distracting it can be to tend to them in the car.
- Take a break if you find yourself "lost in thought,, while driving.

When driving, you'll share the road with pedestrians, trucks, farm tractors, and road repair and snow removal equipment. Keep the following guidelines in mind when driving:

- Use extra care when sharing the road with pedestrians, bicycles, motorcycles, and mopeds. They are small and hard to see.
- Watch for delivery and commercial vehicles that make frequent stops. Allow more following distance than usual.
- Check your vehicle mirrors and look over your shoulder for approaching traffic when pulling into traffic from curbside parking or driveways.

- Be alert and listen for all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles and watch for signs warning of trails and crosswalks along the roadway.



Pedestrians

As a driver, watch out and always yield the right-of-way to people walking, jogging, biking, crossing a street in the middle of a block, or darting from between parked vehicles. Watch for them when entering a street from a driveway or alley, at stop signs, traffic signals, crosswalks, and intersections.

After a traffic light turns green, yield to people crossing a street or vehicles that may still be turning in front of you or crossing the intersection.

When there are no sidewalks, pedestrians should walk on the side of the road facing oncoming traffic. Parents should teach their children this, but drivers must watch for pedestrians.

Be alert for joggers who may be running along roadways. Joggers should wear reflective clothing, use sidewalks or roadway shoulders, and avoid jogging at night, dawn, dusk, or during bad weather. Joggers, like other pedestrians, should be on the side of the road facing oncoming traffic.

Blind Pedestrians

Michigan law requires you to stop or yield the right-of-way when you see a pedestrian with a white cane or guide dog. Only the blind may carry white canes. Avoid honking the horn or revving the engine; these noises are distracting and cover important audible cues used by the blind. Also avoid blocking designated crosswalks. This makes it especially difficult for a visually impaired or blind person to cross the street. It is also an inconvenience for others attempting to cross and violates the rule of always yielding to pedestrians.

Emergency Vehicles

Yield the right-of-way to an emergency vehicle that is approaching from any direction or has stopped when it is displaying flashing warning lights and/or sounding a siren or other audible warning. Emergency vehicles include ambulances, fire department vehicles, police vehicles, and privately owned vehicles for firefighter or life support agencies.



Failure to yield or exercise due caution when passing a stopped emergency vehicle is a civil infraction. In addition, it is a felony to injure or kill emergency personnel for failure to yield or exercise due caution when passing a stationary emergency vehicle.

When you see a stopped emergency vehicle:

- Slow down and move over a lane if possible. If traffic or other conditions prevent you from changing lanes, you must slow down and proceed with due caution.

When an emergency vehicle is approaching:

- Pull over to the edge of the roadway, clear of intersections, and stop.
- Remain there until the emergency vehicle has passed. Watch for others. There may be several other emergency vehicles.
- Keep a foot on the brake so the brake lights let emergency vehicle drivers know you have stopped.
- Stay at least 500 feet behind any moving emergency vehicle displaying flashing warning lights and sounding a siren.
- Never pass a moving emergency vehicle displaying flashing warning lights unless directed to do so by the emergency vehicle driver or a law enforcement officer.

Sharing the Road with Commercial Vehicles



When a commercial vehicle such as a truck or a bus collides with smaller vehicles, people in the smaller vehicles are much

more likely to be severely injured or killed. An automobile driver needs to know the following:

- Commercial vehicle drivers cannot stop or maneuver their vehicles as easily as a passenger vehicle.
- Commercial vehicle drivers may not be able to see vehicles alongside or close behind their commercial vehicles. Stay out of their blind spots.

The factors above are the result of size and weight differences between the two types of vehicles, but vehicle size and weight do not cause crashes—drivers do. Remember to:

- Keep a safe distance behind a truck or bus. Maintain a following distance of at least four seconds behind these and other large or special-use vehicles. Extend this distance as weather or road conditions deteriorate.
- Signal intended lane changes or turns well in advance.
- Never cut off a truck or bus, force it to slow down, or to stop suddenly.
- Allow enough time and distance to pass safely.
- Be careful when passing a truck or bus. Often, commercial vehicle drivers cannot see you.
- Be even more careful passing a truck with a trailer. Often, a driver must swing out to the left or right before making a turn. The driver may not see you and could force you off the road.
- Slow down if a truck or bus is passing you, especially during bad weather. Splash or spray from their tires can reduce visibility. Start your wipers before the vehicle passes.
- At night, use low beam headlights when following a truck or bus.

Tips for Motorcycle Operators

Motorcycle operators have the right to use a full traffic lane. Sometimes they may be forced from one side of the lane to the other by strong winds or a bumpy road.



Because of their smaller size, motorcycles appear to be farther away than they really are and it is hard to judge their speed. Any crash between a larger vehicle and a motorcycle almost always injures or kills the motorcyclist.

Michigan law requires all motorcycle operators and passengers to wear approved, properly fastened safety helmets on their heads. The safety helmet must meet U.S. Department of Transportation standards and be properly labeled.

For protection, all motorcycle riders should wear gloves, reflective clothing, jackets and pants that cover arms and legs completely, and sturdy boots or shoes high enough to cover ankles.

When riding at 35 mph or more, motorcycle operators must use shatterproof goggles, a face shield, or windshield for eye protection. Eye protection is always recommended.

Motorcycle operators should use hand and arm signals even with their motorcycle's turn signals. For more information, obtain a Michigan Motorcycle Operator Manual at a Secretary of State branch office or visit the Secretary of State web site.

Tips for Sharing the Road with Motorcycles

- It is illegal to drive beside a motorcycle in the same traffic lane. However, two motorcycle riders may drive side by side in the same lane.
- Always treat motorcycle operators with courtesy.
- Leave plenty of extra space between your vehicle and a motorcycle ahead. Motorcycles can usually stop in shorter distances and may suddenly swerve to avoid obstacles.
- Pass as you would another vehicle, but not so fast or so close that your tires throw dirt or stones into the rider's face, or a draft from your vehicle blows the motorcycle about.

- Before changing lanes, check to see if a motorcycle is in the space where you plan to move. After you pass, look again before you move back into the other lane. Many motorcycle-vehicle crashes happen when drivers fail to check their blind spots before turning, changing lanes, backing up, or parking.
- The single headlight or taillight of a motorcycle can blend into the lights of other vehicles. A single light in traffic may mean a motorcycle.
- When making left turns, be alert for possible oncoming motorcycles.
- Some motorcycles do not have self-canceling turn signals. So watch for clues such as motorcycle operators or passengers turning their heads to look behind, or motorcycle operators beginning to lean or tilt their vehicles.
- When coming up behind a motorcycle, slow down sooner than you would for other vehicles. Leave plenty of space.
- When pulling out of a side street, remember that an oncoming motorcycle is probably much closer and coming much faster than it appears.

Bicycles and Mopeds

Much of the advice about motorcyclists also applies to bicycle and moped riders. Bicycle and moped riders are allowed to ride in a traffic lane, but must stay as far to the right as practical, obey traffic signals, not ride more than two abreast in a single lane, and must ride in the same direction as other traffic.

A bicycle or moped ridden after dark must have a front headlight and rear reflector. But these may be hard to see. A person riding a bicycle on a sidewalk meant for pedestrians must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and sound a horn or bell before overtaking and passing a pedestrian.

Watch the side of the road for bicycles and mopeds without reflectors. Be ready to dim the headlights. While it is safer

not to, you may drive beside a bicycle or moped in the same lane. Leave plenty of room. A rider may turn sharply to avoid something in the road or a door being opened from a parked vehicle.

The Michigan Vehicle Code does not require vehicles such as go-peds and electric scooters to be registered. Some municipalities have outlawed the use of go-peds and electric scooters on roads and sidewalks.

Although the law only requires moped riders under age 19 to wear approved, properly fastened safety helmets, *all* moped and bicycle riders should wear them as well as reflective clothing.

School Buses: Alternately Flashing School Bus Lights*

With Overhead Red Lights Only



- Overhead red lights are flashing and bus is moving — prepare to stop.
- Overhead red lights are flashing and bus is stopped. Stop no closer than 20 feet from the bus.
- Proceed when red lights are turned off and it is safe to do so.



With Alternately Flashing Overhead Red and Yellow Lights



- Overhead yellow lights are flashing — prepare to stop.
- Overhead red lights are flashing. Stop no closer than 20 feet from the bus.
- Proceed when red lights are turned off and it is safe to do so.



All School Buses



- Yellow hazard warning lights are flashing on moving or stopped bus — proceed with caution.



It is not necessary to stop for a school bus that has stopped on the other side of a divided highway where the road is separated by a barrier.

*AAA Michigan, 1994

Aggressive Driving and Road Rage

Watch for aggressive drivers. Aggressive drivers run stop signs and red lights, speed, tailgate, weave their vehicles in and out of traffic, pass on the right, and may make improper hand gestures. They sometimes yell at you, honk their horns, or flash their headlights.

You must watch for these drivers because their actions place them and other motorists at an increased risk for traffic accidents. We have all seen aggressive drivers. They disregard their own safety as well as that of others. Do not be an aggressive driver. Be courteous and aware of the traffic around you. Take a moment to think about the driving behaviors that bother you. If you drive in the same manner, your behavior probably annoys other drivers. Avoid the following behaviors:

- Merging improperly. Failing to merge smoothly disrupts the flow of traffic. Always try to merge smoothly when entering the expressway or turning from one road to another. If you see a driver making an ill-advised merge or turn, slow down and give him or her room. Getting angry will not help and your anger could adversely affect your judgment, resulting in a traffic crash. A driver may be wrong, but how important is it to prove you are right? Do not risk injury or death because you feel you have been wronged when driving. It is much wiser to back off and allow the driver to merge.
- Driving slowly in the left lane. Under Michigan law, drivers on multiple-lane roadways are required to drive in the right-hand lane except when overtaking and passing. Use all lanes properly and obey the speed limit. If you are using the left-hand lane to pass slower traffic and someone tailgates you, move back into the right-hand lane when it is safe to do so and allow the faster traffic to move ahead. Driving in the left-hand lane and allowing traffic to build up behind you increases the chances aggressive drivers may take careless risks attempting to get around you.

- **Tailgating.** This is another aggressive-driver trait. If another driver tailgates you, pull over and let him or her pass. It is much better to have these unsafe drivers in front where you can see them rather than having them driving on your rear bumper.
- **Gestures.** Never gesture at other drivers when you become angry. If another driver is gesturing to you when you have made a driving error, let him or her know you are sorry. Everyone makes mistakes. Returning gestures or becoming angry will not correct your mistake. It will only serve to make both of you angrier and increase the risk of confrontation or a traffic crash. Don't let yourself become a victim of road rage.

Always remember that safe driving is affected by your driving attitude and your ability to control your stress and anger.

10

Emergencies and Special Situations

This section suggests ways to handle emergencies and special situations. Remember, driving requires complete attention. Unexpected events can happen very quickly, leaving little time to react. Plan ahead.

Emergencies

- Never stop on a freeway except for an emergency. If you must stop, turn on the emergency hazard flashers, slow down gradually, and pull all the way off the pavement as soon as safely possible.
- Always be alert for approaching and passing vehicles and stay well off the roadway. Raise the hood, tie a handkerchief on the radio antenna, driver-side door handle or mirror, then lock the doors and wait for assistance. If you must leave your vehicle, close the hood and lock the vehicle.
- If your vehicle's hood opens while driving, slow down while looking through the windshield between the hood and dashboard or out the window for a place to stop safely.
- Carry a flashlight, flares, or warning triangles to warn other drivers of a disabled vehicle at night. Put flares at least 100 feet behind the vehicle at the side of the road. Additional flares placed beside and 100 feet ahead of the vehicle add more protection.
- When traveling alone or with children at night, it may be a good idea to stay in the vehicle with windows closed and doors locked. It is dangerous and illegal to walk on a freeway.

Braking

Under normal stopping situations, all brake systems are applied the same way—a steady firm push on the brake pedal. Under extreme conditions, such as on snow, ice, or in an emergency stop on dry pavement, antilock brake systems work differently than other brake systems.

In a vehicle with antilock brakes, apply the brake with hard firm pressure from the start and maintain this pressure until you have stopped. You may feel or hear vibrations and/or pulsations—this is normal.

In a vehicle without antilock brakes, apply the brakes just hard enough to not lock the wheels. If the wheels do lock, release pressure and apply the brakes again. This method of braking is sometimes referred to as “threshold,, or “controlled,, braking.

Skids

When driving on snow or a slippery road, slow down gradually. Test the vehicle’s brakes lightly to get a feel for the road. Most skids happen when a driver tries to turn at too high a rate of speed or stop suddenly on slippery pavement.

To prevent a skid in vehicles with standard brakes, use steady pressure on the brakes without locking them. This method allows the wheels to turn, maintaining steering control. If the vehicle has full antilock brakes, maintain brake pressure and steer.

If the vehicle begins to skid, remain calm and do the following:

To Steer Out of a Skid

- Take your foot off the accelerator.
- Turn the front wheels only enough to keep them pointed in the direction you want to go and no farther.
- Be prepared for a secondary skid in the opposite direction.
- Again, turn the wheels in the direction you want to go. Then straighten the wheels to bring the vehicle under control.

Driving in Bad Weather

Preventive maintenance prior to the winter season is the best way to ensure safe travel. Regularly check fluid levels such as power steering, brake, windshield washer, and oil.

Make sure the anti-freeze is strong enough to prevent freezing and fresh enough to prevent rust.

Leave extra time and drive more slowly when it is foggy, raining, or snowing and conditions are hazardous. Allow greater following distance in bad weather. In cold weather, bridges and underpasses freeze before the road does.



Rain

- When it begins to rain, the roads are most slippery during the first half-hour. This is because oil dropped from passing vehicles has not been washed away. Be especially cautious at intersections where oil deposits may be heavier. Slow down and allow at least twice the normal following distance.
- Brakes may become wet after driving through deep water or during heavy rain. Test them, as they may pull to one side or the other, or they may not hold at all. Slow down and gently push on the brake pedal until the brakes work properly again.
- It is possible to lose control of the vehicle on a wet road because the tires ride on top of the water. This is called hydroplaning. This can happen if the vehicle's tires are worn or tire pressure is low.
- When it is foggy, drive slowly. Turn on the low beam headlights. Be ready for a fast stop. If the fog becomes so thick that you cannot see at all, pull off the pavement and stop. Turn on the four-way emergency flashers and wait until the fog lifts.

Using the Headlights

The distance you can see ahead is reduced at night, so driving is more dangerous.

- Headlights must be turned on one half-hour after sunset until one half-hour before sunrise, and at other times when visibility is reduced. Use low-beam headlights when it is foggy, raining, or snowing during the day.
- Headlights must be turned on any time there is not enough daylight to see people and vehicles clearly at 500 feet. It is illegal to drive a vehicle with only parking lights on.
- You should be able to stop within the clear distance you can see ahead. When driving at night, it is most important to drive within the range of the headlights.
- It is illegal to use or even flash high-beam headlights within 500 feet of an oncoming vehicle. Also, dim lights for pedestrians and cyclists.
- If oncoming drivers do not dim their headlights, keep your eyes on the right edge of the road ahead. Do not look straight at oncoming headlights. The glare may blind you for several seconds. A dirty windshield will make headlight glare worse.
- Do not use high beams when driving behind other vehicles. The reflection of bright lights in a driver's rearview mirror can be distracting.

If an Oncoming Vehicle is in Your Lane

- If there is time, tap the horn and flash your headlights to warn the other driver.
- Brake hard, but do not lock the wheels in a vehicle that is not equipped with antilock brakes.
- Look for an escape route on the right edge of the road.
- Try not to go to the left since the other driver may see you and return to his or her proper lane.

- Try an emergency stop in your lane only if there is enough room and you cannot pull off the road.
- If you cannot stop before hitting another vehicle, try to steer around the vehicle. Do not turn more than needed to avoid a crash.

When Involved in a Crash

- Stop and remain at the scene.
- Help secure medical aid for the injured.
- If possible, get off the roadway and/or move vehicles out of the path of traffic.
- Notify the police if there are injuries or property damage.
- Exchange names, addresses, driver license numbers, and registration and insurance information with the other driver(s) involved.
- Leaving the scene of an accident could result in fines and/or imprisonment.

The Car/Deer Collision

At night, be alert for shining eyes at the roadside. Slow down. Be ready to stop—deer are very unpredictable. Try not to swerve if a deer enters the roadway. If one deer is visible, others may be nearby. If you hit a deer, report it to the local or state police, sheriff's department, or the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. They also can provide a permit to keep it.

Other Safety Tips

- Never turn the ignition to the “lock,” position while your vehicle is in motion. This will cause the steering to lock. Once the steering locks, if you try to turn the steering wheel, you will lose control of the vehicle.
- Never leave keys in the car or ignition.

- Make sure there is enough gas.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Is there a police or fire station nearby, open service station, or other open business to get help should you need it?
- Do not hitchhike or pick up hitchhikers.

11 Snowmobiles, ORVs, and Watercraft — Some Facts to Know

Michigan provides many recreational opportunities for snowmobiles, off-road vehicles (ORVs), and watercraft with its extensive network of trails and more than 11,000 lakes. With so many outdoor enthusiasts enjoying Michigan's trails and waterways, we offer this special section on snowmobiles, ORVs, and watercraft. Additional information is available on our web site.

Snowmobiles

You may register your snowmobile at any Secretary of State branch office. All snowmobiles used on public lands must display a three-year registration and an annual Snowmobile Trail Permit sticker. Snowmobile trail permits are required of nonresidents as well as residents. They are not required for snowmobiles used on private land. Trail permits are sold by agents of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), including sporting goods stores, local retailers, snowmobile dealers, department stores, and resort motels. Visit the DNR web site at www.michigandnr.com for the location nearest you.

Off-Road Vehicles (ORV)

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) issues all ORV decals. The decals are valid for one year. All ORVs operated in Michigan must display a valid ORV decal except in special circumstances. Please contact the DNR for more information.

Snowmobiles, ORVs, and Alcohol

Michigan's tough stand against drinking and driving now includes snowmobiles and ORVs in an effort to reduce the risk of injury, death, or damage to personal property. State law requires the Secretary of State to record on your driver record any violations and points you receive for drinking while operating a snowmobile or ORV. Points added to your driver record may result in your driver license being suspended or revoked, preventing you from driving any motor vehicle in Michigan. Fines and penalties increase with additional convictions.

You may also be denied an original Commercial Driver License (CDL) and an original Driver Training Instructor License.

A Summary of Snowmobile (SM) and ORV Crimes

First conviction

OWI

- (ORV) Up to 12 days of community service.
- (SM) Up to 45 days of community service.
- (SM, ORV) Up to 93 days in jail.
- (SM, ORV) Fines up to \$300.
- (SM, ORV) May not operate SM/ORV for 90 days to one year.
- (SM, ORV) Four points added to driver record.

Second conviction within seven years

OWI

- (ORV) Up to 12 days of community service.
- (ORV) Up to one year in jail.
- (ORV) Fines up to \$1,000.
- (ORV) May not operate ORV for six months to 18 months.
- (SM) 10 days to 90 days of community service and jail up to one year OR
 - Up to 90 days community service and jail for two days to one year.

- (SM) Fines from \$200 to \$1,000.
- (SM) May not operate SM for six months to two years.
- (SM, ORV) Four points added to driver record.

First conviction

OUIL/OUID/UBAC—One or more of the following:

- (ORV) Up to 12 days community service.
- (SM) Up to 45 days of community service.
- (SM, ORV) Up to 93 days in jail.
- (SM, ORV) Fines from \$100 to \$500.
- (SM, ORV) May not operate SM/ORV for six months to two years.
- (SM, ORV) Six points added to driver record.

Second conviction within seven years

OUIL/OUID/UBAC

- (ORV) Up to 12 days community service.
- (SM) 10 days to 90 days of community service and jail up to one year OR
 - Up to 90 days community service and jail for two days to one year.
- (ORV) Up to \$1000 fine.
- (SM) Fines from \$200 to \$1,000.
- (ORV) May not operate ORV for one to two years.
- (SM) Revocation of SM operating privileges.
- (SM, ORV) Six points added to driver record.

Any conviction

OUIL/OWI (causing serious injury—felony)

- (SM, ORV) Up to five years in jail OR
 - fines from \$1,000 to \$5,000, or both.
- (SM) Revocation of SM operating privileges.
- (SM, ORV) Six points added to driver record.

OUIL/OWI (causing death—felony)

- (SM, ORV) Up to 15 years in jail OR
 - fines from \$2,500 to \$10,000, or both.
- (SM) Revocation of SM operating privileges.
- (SM, ORV) Six points added to driver record.

Watercraft

All watercraft on Michigan waters, including privately owned lakes and waterways, must be registered and display a valid registration decal. The only watercraft exempt from registration are canoes, kayaks, and boats under 16 feet long without motors; and canoes and kayaks over 16 feet long without motors.

A Summary of Watercraft Crimes

OWI/OWI by drugs

First conviction

- May not operate a watercraft for six months to one year.

Second conviction within seven years

- May not operate a watercraft for one to two years.

Third conviction within 10 years

- Revocation of watercraft operating privileges.

OUIL/UBAC/OUID/Combined OUIL/UBAC/ Combined OUIL/OUID

First conviction

- May not operate a watercraft for one to two years.

Second conviction within seven years

- May not operate a watercraft for two years.

Third conviction within 10 years

- Revocation of watercraft operating privileges.

OUIL/OUID (causing injury—felony)/ OUIL/OUID (causing death—felony)

- Revocation of watercraft operating privileges.

12

Titles, Insurance, Registrations, and License Plates

Vehicles are required to be titled, registered, insured, and display a valid license plate to operate on Michigan roadways. The Secretary of State provides a variety of ways Michigan motorists may easily complete these requirements. In this section, you will find information on how to register and keep your motor vehicle legal.

Title Certificates

A title is a legal document that shows who owns certain property. In Michigan, motor vehicles, trailer coaches, trailers weighing 2,500 pounds or more empty, off-road vehicles, pickup campers, and watercraft 20 feet and over or with a permanently affixed engine must be titled.

New Residents

New Michigan residents must *immediately* title and register their vehicles at a branch office and turn in the titles or other proofs of ownership from their previous home state. “Resident,, means every person who resides in a settled or permanent home or domicile with the intention of remaining in this state. A person who obtains employment in Michigan is presumed to have the intention of remaining here.

Buying a Vehicle in Another State

If your vehicle was purchased in another state, submit the assigned title or proof of ownership when applying for Michigan title and registration. Tax will be due on either the purchase price or the retail value of the vehicle, whichever is greater. However, credit may be given for taxes paid in another state.

Buying a Vehicle from a Dealer

When you buy a new or used vehicle from a licensed Michigan dealer, the dealer provides all necessary forms and ownership documents, collects the necessary fees and taxes, files the title application with a Secretary of State branch office within 15 days from the date of delivery, purchases or transfers the license plate, and provides copies of all paperwork.

By law, the dealer must immediately provide a copy of each document you sign at the time of signing. Never sign any blank documents or sign a document without reading it carefully.

Buying a Vehicle from an Individual

When buying a vehicle titled in Michigan from an individual, all owners named on the face of the title must sign the title assignment as sellers. The title assignment must show the name and address of the purchasers, the name of the sellers, the date of sale, the current mileage reading, and the selling price.

If possible, the buyer and seller should complete the title transfer together at a Secretary of State branch office. The title transfer must be filed with the Secretary of State within 15 days from the date of the sale to avoid a late fee. If the title shows there was a lien (loan) on the vehicle, you need to get a discharge of lien from the lending institution shown on the title. Submit the discharge form with the title. By law, you may drive an unregistered vehicle to the first place of storage (usually home) within three days of purchase. You must carry the properly assigned title and use the most direct route.

Tax Liability

Although the Secretary of State collects use tax when the title is transferred, the final determination of the tax owed on vehicle transfers is made by the Michigan Department of Treasury.

Use tax is due on the purchase price or the retail value of the vehicle, whichever is greater.

If the Department of Treasury determines the tax liability differs from the amount collected with the title transfer, you must pay the difference plus interest. Additional penalties, including criminal prosecution, may apply.

Use Tax Exemption for a Relative

Michigan law grants an exemption from use tax when the buyer and seller have a qualifying relationship limited to spouse; mother, including stepmother; father, including stepfather; brother, including stepbrother; sister, including stepsister; child, including adopted child and stepchild; grandparent; grandchild; legal ward; and legally-appointed guardian with a certified letter of guardianship.

Relationships that Do Not Qualify for a Tax Exemption

Relationships that do not qualify for a tax exemption include all in-laws (for example: father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law), aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, step-grandparents, step-grandchildren, former spouses, and common-law relationships unless the common-law marriage took place before January 1, 1957.

Supporting Your Claim

Anyone claiming a use tax exemption based on a family relationship may be requested by the Department of Treasury to produce documents supporting the claim. Documents supporting your claim must show the relationship of the new owner to the previous owner.

It is not the responsibility of Secretary of State offices to verify claims, so you do not need to have supporting documents with you when you transfer the title. For additional tax exemption information please contact the Michigan Department of Treasury at 517/373-3190.

Odometer Statement

Under federal and state law, the mileage for most motor vehicles must be recorded when assigning a title. Vehicles 10 years old or older are exempt. The seller enters the mileage reading in the indicated area of title assignment and states whether the mileage is actual, not actual, or exceeds the mechanical limits of the odometer.

Buyers should compare the declared mileage with the mileage shown on the odometer.

Selling a Vehicle

When selling a vehicle, you should try to meet the buyer at a Secretary of State branch office to complete the title transfer. If this is not possible, photocopy the front and back of the vehicle title after completing the seller's portion of the title.

As the seller, complete the seller's portions of the title assignment by entering the vehicle mileage, the buyer's name, date, and selling price. If more than one owner is named on the front of the title, each person must sign his or her full name as seller. Have the buyer enter his or her name, address, and signature in the buyer's portion of the title assignment. Alterations on a title void it. Give the buyer the release form if a lien (loan) is shown on the title.

Keep the license plate. Never leave it on the vehicle or let the buyer use it. You may be able to transfer it to your next vehicle. Contact your insurance company to cancel coverage on the sold vehicle.

Insurance Required

Owners of passenger vehicles and trucks must purchase Michigan no-fault insurance before registering a vehicle. Out-of-state insurance policies cannot be used to meet Michigan insurance requirements for registering a vehicle.

Keep proof of insurance in your vehicle or carry it with you whenever you drive. If you cannot show proof of insurance to a law enforcement officer, the court may order the Secretary of State to suspend your driver license. Until proof of insurance is shown, the Secretary of State will not renew, transfer, or replace the vehicle's license plate. You may be required to prove the vehicle is insured for not less than six months and pay \$50, plus any other fees required by law. The plate could also be canceled if proof of insurance is not produced. If a false certificate of insurance is shown to a law enforcement officer, the plate will be canceled and you may be sentenced up to one year in jail and fined up to \$1,000. Motorcycles must also be insured, but are not required to carry no-fault insurance.

Registration

All motor vehicles and trailers used on Michigan roads must be registered and display valid license plates. To register a motor vehicle, provide either the previous registration or proof of insurance and ownership.

When renewing a license plate, you will receive a new registration certificate. Sign the registration in the space provided. The registration should always be kept with you or in your vehicle. You will be asked to show the registration and proof of insurance if stopped by a law enforcement officer.

Your license plate, including personalized plates, for your automobile, motor home, pickup, van, trailer, or trailer coach expires on your birthday. Motorcycle plates expire March 31. For more information, visit the Secretary of State web site.

Low-Speed Vehicles

A valid driver license is required to operate a low-speed vehicle. Low-speed vehicles are subject to regular titling and registration requirements, and all traffic laws. They may be operated on roads having a speed limit of 35 mph or less and may cross roads with higher speed limits.

License Plate Renewal Forms

Your Personal Identification Number (PIN)

If your insurance company has electronically verified your insurance coverage with the Secretary of State, you will find a nine-digit personal identification number (PIN) in the lower left corner of your registration renewal notice.

If you have a PIN on your registration renewal notice, you do not need to provide proof of insurance whether you are renewing by mail, fax, touch-tone telephone, Internet, or in person at a branch office. If you own more than one vehicle, a different PIN will be printed on each vehicle registration.

Renewal by Mail

You will receive a preprinted license plate renewal application in the mail about 45 days before your license plate expires. In the envelope provided, return your application, payment, and proof of Michigan no-fault insurance (if you do not have a PIN). Payment is by check, money order, or credit card. Renewal by Mail is a convenient way to renew. If you no longer own the vehicle or the plate, destroy the form.

Renewal by Fax

You also may renew your plate by fax. Renewing by fax is convenient and easy. Along with a cover sheet, fax these forms: proof of Michigan no-fault insurance (if you do not have a PIN), preprinted plate renewal application, and the completed credit card authorization slip. Payment is by credit card only.

On the cover sheet include your name, daytime telephone number, and the plate number for each plate being renewed.

The Tabs-by-FAX number is 517/322-6822. Your license plate tab is mailed to you within a week.

Renewal by Touch-Tone Telephone and Internet

You can renew by touch-tone telephone or over the Internet if your registration renewal notice contains a PIN and all the information is correct. If you need to change your address, or your registration is expired for more than 30 days, please renew by mail, fax, or at a branch office.

To renew by touch-tone telephone or Internet, follow the easy instructions in your renewal notice. Payment is by credit card only. Your new registration and tabs will be mailed to the address printed on the renewal notice within 10 days.

License Plates Stay with the Owner

When you buy a license plate for your vehicle, the plate stays in your name. If you sell the vehicle, keep your license plate and registration. You may transfer your license plate to another vehicle you own at a Secretary of State branch office.

Personalized License Plates

Personalized license plates may be purchased each year for the annual registration fee plus a yearly service fee. Applications for personalized plates are processed at Secretary of State branch offices.

Specialty and Fundraising License Plates

The Secretary of State offers a variety of license plate styles. Choices include the traditional blue-and-white plate, the Great Lakes Splendor plate, and several plates recognizing veterans, ex-prisoners of war, and members of the National Guard.

The Secretary of State also offers fundraising license plates to raise money for the Northern Michigan Olympic

Education Center, Michigan's 15 state-supported universities, and the following six state-supported causes: agricultural heritage, children, lighthouses, veterans, water quality, and wildlife habitat.

For information on license plate availability, fees, and ordering, please contact a Secretary of State branch office or visit the Secretary of State web site.

Buying 14-day Permits

You can buy a 14-day permit instead of a license plate if you want to move an unlicensed vehicle or trailer. Bring proof of ownership, such as a title or previous registration, and your proof of insurance. This permit cannot be issued for a vehicle used to transport passengers for hire or for transporting goods, wares, or merchandise.

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Disabilities and Parking

This section provides information on disabilities and parking. Laws for parking vehicles and issuing disability parking placards and license plates are intended to allow persons with disabilities easier access when conducting business, shopping, or enjoying the many attractions Michigan offers. All drivers must be aware of Michigan's disability parking laws. Local municipalities enforce disability parking laws.

License Plates for Individuals with Disabilities

If you have a disability that significantly limits your ability to walk, or are legally blind, you can obtain a disability license plate at no extra cost. The license plate allows you, or someone driving your vehicle while transporting you, to park in any disability parking space.

A household member may also apply for a disability license plate if he or she is responsible for providing your transportation. Disability license plates are also issued to facilities serving and transporting persons with disabilities.

Disability license plate applications are available at Secretary of State branch offices and must be certified by your physician.

Reduced Fee Registration For Certain Vans

Under state law, if you use a wheelchair and own a van with a disability license plate, or if someone in your household owns the van and uses it to transport you, then the annual registration fee is reduced 50 percent.

Disability Parking Placards

The Secretary of State issues two types of disability parking placards. A temporary disability placard is issued for up to six months, usually to people who are temporarily disabled because of injury such as a broken leg, surgery, or a medical condition that is expected to improve.

A permanent disability placard is issued for four years to people with a disability that is medically not expected to improve.

Applications for disability parking placards are available at Secretary of State branch offices or by calling 517/322-6274. Your physician must complete and sign the application before you submit it to the Secretary of State.

Do not drive with a disability placard hanging from your rearview mirror. This reduces your ability to see clearly. Display the disability placard after parking your vehicle and remove it before driving.

Free Parking

Free parking is offered to persons with severe disabilities and requires use of a free parking sticker.

A person with a disability must have a valid driver license to qualify for a free parking sticker.

Free parking at public ramps and parking meters is limited to those people who have the free parking sticker attached to their disability placard.

Free parking is issued only if a physician certifies that the person with a disability lacks the manual dexterity to put coins in a meter, cannot walk more than 20 feet, or cannot access a meter due to use of a wheelchair or other device.

Persons with a disability who qualify for free parking must display a disability placard with the free parking sticker attached. A disability license plate alone does not qualify for free parking.

Disability Parking Spaces

It is illegal to park in a disability parking space if you do not have a valid disability license plate or parking placard, even if you are disabled. It is also illegal to park in a disability parking space if none of the occupants in the vehicle are disabled.



Van Accessible Parking

Van accessible parking spaces are wider than standard parking spaces. This provides space for the van's wheelchair lift and ramp, allowing the person with a disability room to exit and enter the vehicle. For this reason, it is extremely important not to park within the painted area of the van accessible parking space, including the access aisle (painted area on either side of the disability parking space). Doing so may prevent the person with a disability from exiting or entering the vehicle.



Under state law, law enforcement or a governmental agency designated by law enforcement may issue tickets and tow away vehicles of drivers who:

- Park, stop, or stand in a disability parking space.
- Park in a defined access aisle or access lane adjacent to a disability parking space.
- Park in a manner that interferes with a ramp or a curb cut used by persons with disabilities.

Penalties for Misuse of a Disability License Plate or Parking Placard

Improper use, forging, or copying of a disability license plate or parking placard may result in a fine of up to \$500.

Misuse of a license plate or disability parking placard deprives a person with a disability the use of a parking space. Not only is this a great inconvenience for people with disabilities, it may prevent them from conducting their business.

Test Your Safe Driving Knowledge

What Every Driver Must Know Selected Questions from the Michigan Driver Education Classroom Competency Test

(Correct answers may be found at the bottom of p. 117)

1. City driving is more dangerous than expressway driving because of the:
 - a. Lower speed limits.
 - b. Narrower driving lanes.
 - c. Cross traffic and pedestrians.
 - d. Worse road conditions in bad weather.
2. You come to an intersection with a flashing red light. You must:
 - a. Slow down and drive carefully through the intersection.
 - b. Turn either right or left since the road is blocked ahead.
 - c. Stop at the intersection and wait for a flashing green light.
 - d. Stop at the intersection, then proceed as traffic allows.
3. You are driving in the right lane on an expressway. You should probably move into the left lane when:
 - a. Traffic is heavy but moving steadily.
 - b. The weather is bad and roads are slippery.
 - c. Traffic is slow in your lane and cars are in the left lane.
 - d. Traffic is light and cars are merging onto the expressway from the right
4. Before turning left, it is important to:
 - a. Sound your horn.
 - b. Yield to oncoming vehicles.
 - c. Swing to the right side of your lane.
 - d. Wait until oncoming traffic has a red light.

5. When entering an expressway behind several other vehicles, it is MOST important to:
 - a. Keep your eyes on the vehicle in back of you.
 - b. Adjust the position and speed of your vehicle to the flow of traffic.
 - c. Stay as close as possible to the vehicle in front of you.
 - d. Cancel your turn signal.
6. To reduce the effects of headlight glare at night, you should look:
 - a. Straight ahead.
 - b. Over your shoulder.
 - c. At the center of the road.
 - d. To the right edge of the road.
7. You are coming to an intersection with a yellow flashing light. You should:
 - a. Stop and wait for the light to change.
 - b. Make a U-turn; the intersection is closed.
 - c. Drive carefully through the intersection.
 - d. Prepare to stop; the light is about to turn red.
8. When changing lanes, you can check your blind spot by:
 - a. Using the inside rearview mirror.
 - b. Using the outside rearview mirror.
 - c. Using both inside and outside rearview mirrors.
 - d. Turning your head and looking over your shoulder.

Answers:

1 (c); 2 (d); 3 (d); 4 (b); 5 (b); 6 (d); 7 (c); 8 (d)

The Michigan Department of State thanks the following organizations and agencies for their assistance: AAA Michigan, Michigan Department of Education, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Department of Community Health, Michigan Department of State Police, Office of Highway Safety Planning, Michigan Department of Transportation, Michigan State University, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and Traffic Safety Association of Michigan.

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Customer Service—The Top Priority

For questions or information not covered below, telephone 517/322-1460.

Information about Secretary of State services, programs, documents, and brochures is also available on the Secretary of State web site: www.sos.state.mi.us

Evening Hours

Branch offices are open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Most Secretary of State branch offices are open Wednesdays 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., providing convenient hours for customers with traditional workday hours.

Renewal by Mail, Touch-Tone Telephone, Internet, and FAX

Renew your vehicle registration the most convenient way: by mail, touch-tone telephone, Internet, or fax. Look for the instructions in the brochure enclosed with the registration renewal notice. License plate tabs will arrive by mail within 10 days.

Fax-on-Demand

Fax-on-Demand allows you to use a touch-tone telephone to request copies of the department's various forms and documents. These will be faxed to the fax machine you designate. To reach Fax-on-Demand, call 517/335-4FAX (4329). There is no charge for this service, except for the cost of the telephone call.

Access for Disabled Individuals

Individuals with a disability will find Secretary of State branch offices in compliance with standards established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you need accommodation or have been denied services, telephone 517/322-1460 (voice) or 517/322-1477 (TTY).

Interpreters

Customers can request Ameslan (American Sign Language) interpreters in advance of a branch office visit or may use an interpreter they know. The Secretary of State compensates interpreters.

For more information, call 517/322-1477 (TTY) or telephone the Michigan Relay Center at 800/649-3777.

Foreign Language Tests

Original and renewal driver license tests are available in many foreign languages with English and Spanish versions available on audiotape.



www.sos.state.mi.us